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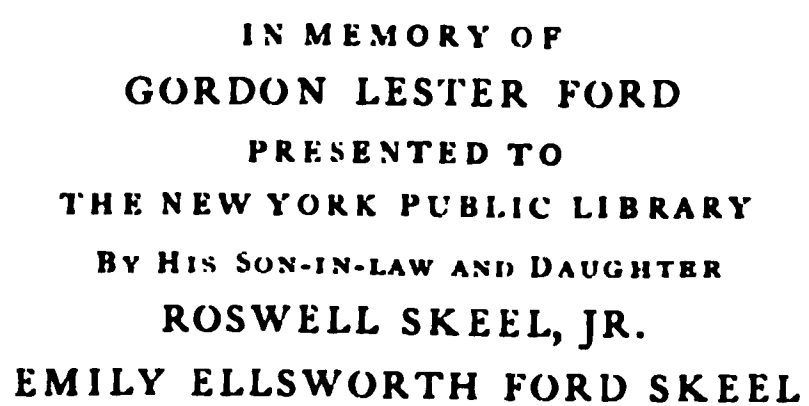
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ANDREW JACKSON



1. *Chlorophyll a* (Chl *a*)

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L I F E  
OF  
A N D R E W J A C K S O N.  
IN THREE VOLUMES.

BY JAMES PARTON,  
AUTHOR OF "LIFE OF AARON BURE," "HUMOROUS POETRY OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE," ETC.

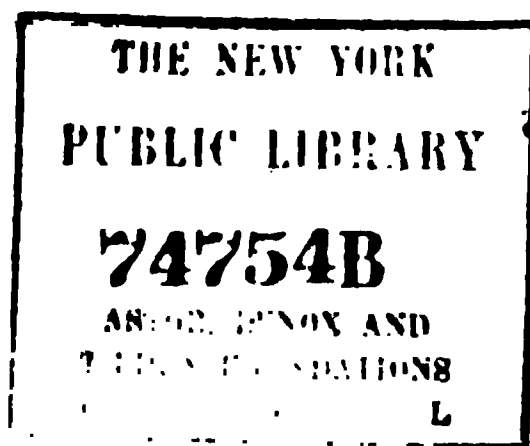
"DESPERATE COURAGE MAKES ONE A MAJORITY."

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1860.



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## CHAPTER I.

### GENERAL JACKSON NOMINATED.

WIRE-PULLER is an opprobrious name, the popular theory being that a President of the United States is the choice of the people, expressed spontaneously. But a little reflection will lead any intelligent person to the conclusion that the popular choice can not often be spontaneous. In order that the people may be enabled to give effective expression to their desires, it is necessary that, from the mass of those who aspire to serve them, the two men should be selected who, more than any others, represent the divergent tendencies of the time. It will not happen once in a century that two men will stand before the people so distinctively representative that the two parties will spontaneously look up to them as their standard-bearers. And when that does happen, the superior claims of those two individuals will not be apparent to their rivals.

Therefore, before the presidential course can be cleared for a fair contest between two candidates, there must be a great deal of work done of the kind commonly stigmatized as wire-pulling. Rival interests must be conciliated ; competing vanities soothed ; undeniable claims postponed ; groundless pretensions put aside ; local pride flattered or allayed ; local prejudices ascertained and considered. Long journeys must be performed and long letters written ; there must be consultations in editorial sanctums, in custom-house parlors, in country mansions, in law-offices, in the inner snuggeries of great hotels, in the lobbies and committee-rooms of legislative halls.

As these preliminary labors are absolutely necessary to enable the people to give effectual expression to their will, they are not necessarily dishonorable. As a general rule, such labors will be performed by the friends of the men whose elevation is sought, by the advocates of the opinions they represent, and by those who expect honor and advantage from the success of the candidate whose cause they espouse. Wire-pulling can not be dispensed with in a republic. We have only to demand, therefore, of the wire-puller that his ends and aims be patriotic, more than they are personal, and that all his movements, though necessarily secret, should be such as will bear exposure when their object is accomplished. Nothing is fair in politics but fair play.

The man who contributed most to the elevation of General Jackson to the presidency was Major William B. Lewis, of Nashville. General Jackson himself said as much. From the year 1822 to 1829, the principal employment of Major Lewis' leisure hours was electioneering for General Jackson; and when his efforts had been crowned with success, he accompanied the General to Washington, and lived with him in the presidential mansion, sharing the private apartments of the President, and not unfrequently his bed-chamber. Major Lewis, in most matters political and domestic, was General Jackson's second self. Nothing was done without his cognizance, and few things without his aid. Possessed of an ample estate, modest and unambitious, the labors of Major Lewis on behalf of General Jackson were disinterested and voluntary, and his influence upon the General was at all times salutary. He almost alone retained to the last the friendship of General Jackson, without agreeing with him in opinion upon subjects of controversy.

In the enjoyment now of a green and vigorous old age, Major Lewis has spent many laborious hours and days in the service of the readers of these pages, recalling and recording the scenes of the past, in which he acted a part so distinguished. What he did for General Jackson's elevation will bear exposition. Nothing need be concealed; nothing shall



be concealed. By the aid chiefly of this worthy and obliging gentleman, nearly every controverted question relating either to the election or the administration of General Jackson, I shall be enabled to set at rest for ever. The reader shall know as much of those singular affairs as though he had been daily closeted with General Jackson at the Hermitage, and nightly pillowed with him at the White House.

It is due to Major Lewis to state that he is not to be held responsible for any opinion, or intimation of opinion, not expressed in his own language. Often I have had to regret being compelled to arrive at conclusions different from those of gentlemen to whom the reader is under great obligations, and with whom it would have been a pleasure to agree. "I have no doubt," writes Major Lewis, "that I shall be abused by the former enemies, as well as by some of the pretended friends of General Jackson. But I shall little heed their abuse. My object in furnishing you with documents, letters, and information relating to the life and character of the General, has been to let the whole truth be told—to let him speak for himself on all proper occasions. This, I think, has been your policy from the commencement, and I approve it. Every thing that I have said or written to you, connected with your Life of Jackson, has been uttered with as much solemnity and truthfulness as if I had been under oath."

Major Lewis shall now tell us the curious story of General Jackson's starting for the presidential race.

The facts have never before been made public. The popular story is, that at some town meeting in western Pennsylvania, a mechanic, seized with a sudden and uncontrollable enthusiasm, tossed his old hat skyward, and roared out the magic cry, "Hurrah for Jackson!" The meeting responded with shouts unanimous.\* The Alleghanies took it up, and

\* Another version is the following :

"No organized body of partisans, no faction, no caucus, no convention, no committee first nominated him. A simple mechanic in a western village of Pennsylvania, in the summer of 1822, amidst a group of his fellow-villagers, who were discoursing on the services he had performed and the persecutions

sent it echoing through the valley of the Mississippi, and all along the Atlantic coast. And so forth. Mr. Colton, the biographer of Henry Clay, gives an account infinitely more absurd : " On the 8th of January, 1824, the Hon. J. Q. Adams made a party in honor of General Jackson. The party was a brilliant one, attended by the President of the United States, the foreign ambassadors, members of Congress, public functionaries, and a host of distinguished strangers. General Jackson was, of course, the STAR of the evening, ' the observed of all observers,' with Mrs. Adams on his arm, who, with grace and dignity, did the honors of hostess, in presenting the General to her various and numerous guests. General Jackson, certainly, was not unknown before ; but this occasion lifted him, from the comparatively vulgar place of a meteor, in the atmosphere of earth, to the position of a fixed orb in the firmament above. *From that moment he began to be thought of as a candidate for the presidency.*"

The narrative about to be given was drawn up in one of the later years of General Jackson's presidency, for the gratification of a leading member of the cabinet, who (in 1859) is again a member of the cabinet, General Cass. Major Lewis begins by refuting two common errors : first, that Aaron Burr's letter to Governor Alston, in 1815, was the direct cause of General Jackson's nomination ; secondly, that that nomination was effected by a union of the federalists with a faction of malcontent republicans. He shows that Burr's letter was never seen by General Jackson, nor by any man who took a leading part in his election, until after his election to the presidency. He denies, too, that any federalist had any agency in the production of those letters of General Jackson to Mr. Monroe, the publication of which,

he endured, exclaimed, ' Let us have him for our next president, and show his slanderers that we don't believe them.' The proposal was caught with enthusiasm and assented to with acclamation. It was soon in active circulation round the adjacent country ; for being approved of by every heart, it was repeated by every tongue. It made its way into the newspapers ; the whole nation heard it ; and millions who knew not whence the suggestion originated, responded to its propriety."—*Jackson Wreath*, 1829, p. 61.

he admits, did win to the General's support a large number of the old party.

"I know," writes Major Lewis, "that no federalist wrote the letters referred to. The principal letter was written at my residence in the vicinity of Nashville, and was not seen by any one, with the exception of the General and myself, until it was received by Mr. Monroe. In fact it was copied by me, at the General's request, and sent to Mr. Monroe in my handwriting. The truth is, I was so struck with the noble sentiments it breathed, that I took an extra copy of it to be put upon my own private files, with the intention, should I outlive the General, to place it in the hands of his future biographer.

"Candor, however, requires that I should admit, as I freely do, that the publication of this letter, together with that of the 6th January, 1817, had the effect of rallying to the support of General Jackson many of the federalists, particularly that portion of them who supported the war, and hated John Quincy Adams for having turned traitor to his party. But in making this admission I must not be understood as countenancing, in the slightest degree, the charge which some have labored to establish of a combination between him and the federalists. It must be borne in mind that the publication of these letters did not take place until May, 1824, about six months only before the presidential election, and could not, therefore, have been instrumental in bringing about a combination.

"That these letters, when published, must have had a powerful effect upon that portion of the federalists named above, I can readily imagine from my own personal observation in relation to several individuals, who had always belonged to the federal party. I will name one. A friend of mine, a distinguished and leading federalist of North Carolina, was spending a few days with me, in the summer, or fall of 1823, and in our conversations upon political subjects I found he was quite undecided as to which of the presidential candidates he would support. I pretty soon discovered,

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however, that he was bitterly opposed to Mr. Adams, whom he spoke of as a '*d——d traitor*;' but he said nothing that induced me to believe he was favorably inclined toward General Jackson, though they had long been personal friends. Upon the whole, I thought his leanings were rather in favor of Mr. Crawford, but not by any means definitely so. After conversing with him the previous evening upon these subjects, I determined to make an experiment upon him the next morning with General Jackson's letter of 12th November, 1816, and accordingly got the copy of it I had kept, before I went to bed, and laid it upon my table. I rose early the next morning, and finding my friend already up and taking a walk in the garden, I sallied forth, and on approaching him handed him the General's letter, begged him to read it, and tell me what he thought of it. He took it, gave it an attentive perusal, and addressing himself to me, with an air of incredulity, inquired if General Jackson had really written such a letter to Mr. Monroe.

" 'Certainly,' I replied.

" 'And actually sent it ?'

" 'Yes,' I again replied.

" 'Lewis, you are quizzing me,' he said.

" 'No,' I assured him, 'I am not.'

" Upon this his countenance became animated with joy and delight, and he replied,

" 'Then *he* is my man for the presidency. Henceforth, from this very moment, until the election is over, will I give him my cordial and zealous support.'

" He returned shortly afterward to North Carolina, and took a decided and energetic part in the contest, rallied his friends under the Jackson banner, and, in conjunction with a large and zealous portion of the democratic party, succeeded in carrying the State by upward of five thousand majority over the regular caucus candidate, William H. Crawford.

" Who was this friend, methinks I hear you ask. It was no other than General William Polk, of Raleigh, who, on account of his high military services in the revolutionary war,

his energy of character, his moral worth, and great wealth, was one of the most distinguished and influential men in the State. Although the Jackson men triumphed in North Carolina, yet their candidate was defeated. My gallant friend, however, nothing daunted, again buckled on his armor, and continued the conflict until complete success crowned the efforts of himself and friends, in the election of General Jackson in the autumn of 1828."

Having disposed of these errors, Major Lewis proceeds to relate the indubitable events, as they occurred under his own eye, and many of them at his own suggestion.

#### MAJOR LEWIS' NARRATIVE.

"When General Jackson was fighting the battles of his country, and acquiring for himself and it imperishable glory, he never once thought, as I verily believe, of reaching the presidency. He did not dream of such a thing—the idea never entered his imagination. All he aimed at, or desired at the time, was military renown acquired by patriotic services. This he prized far above all civil fame, and does even now, if I know any thing of the feelings of his heart. He was naturally and essentially a military man. Full of ardor, of indomitable courage, possessing the rare quality of inspiring every man about him with feelings as enthusiastic and dauntless as his own; quick to conceive and as prompt to execute; vigilant and of untiring industry; and, in addition to all these high and noble qualities, he was endowed with a sound judgment and discriminating mind. In fact, he had all the requisites of a great military commander, and, with the same theater to act upon, he would not, in my opinion, have been inferior to any of the great of either ancient or modern times. This you may consider extravagant; but, I assure you, I do firmly and conscientiously believe, that by nature he was not, as a military man, inferior to either Alexander, Julius Cæsar, or Napoleon Bonaparte, and had he occupied the place of either, under like circumstances, would not have been less successful or distinguished!

"With these feelings and views, thirsting for military fame, and ambitious of being distinguished as a great commander, is it unreasonable to suppose that civil honors were but little coveted, or cared for by him? No, my friend. He did not even dream of the high civic destiny that awaited him, and which was to be the crowning glory of his life and character. The first suggestion of that sort came from Kentucky, and was made, in the summer of 1815, by an officer who was under his command and assisted in the defense of New Orleans. (Mr. Edward Livingston,

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"When General Jackson was fighting the battles of his country, and acquiring for himself and it imperishable glory, he never once thought, as I verily believe, of reaching the presidency. He did not dream of such a thing—the idea never entered his imagination. All he aimed at or desired at the time, was military renown acquired by patriotic services. This he prized far above all civil fame, and does even now, if I know any thing of the feelings of his heart. He was naturally and essentially a military man. Full of ardor, of indomitable courage, possessing the rare quality of inspiring every man about him with feelings as enthusiastic and dauntless as his own; quick to conceive and as prompt to execute; vigilant and of untiring industry; and, in addition to all these high and noble qualities, he was endowed with a sound judgment and discriminating mind. In fact, he had all the requisites of a great military commander, and, with the same theater to act upon, he would not, in my opinion, have been inferior to any of the great of either ancient or modern times. This you may consider extravagant; but, I assure you, I do firmly and conscientiously believe, that by nature he was not, as a military man, inferior to either Alexander, Julius Cæsar, or Napoleon Bonaparte, and had he occupied the place of either, under like circumstances, would not have been less successful or distinguished!

"With these feelings and views, thirsting for military fame, and ambitious of being distinguished as a great commander, is it unreasonable to suppose that civil honors were but little coveted, or cared for by him? No, my friend. He did not even dream of the high civic destiny that awaited him, and which was to be the crowning glory of his life and character. The first suggestion of that sort came from Kentucky, and was made, in the summer of 1815, by an officer who was under his command and assisted in the defense of New Orleans. (Mr. Edward Livingston,

too, about this time, suggested the same thing.) The letter of this officer was addressed to a third person, a mutual friend, who inclosed it to General Jackson, as was undoubtedly expected by the writer. In this letter it was proposed that he should be forthwith brought out as a candidate; but the General laughed at the idea, and, returning the letter to his friend, begged that nothing further might be either said or done in relation to the matter. The proposition was too absurd, he said, to be entertained for a moment. In fact, nothing further *was* thought or said, as I believe, upon the subject of his being a candidate, until about the close of Mr. Monroe's first term. Thus began and thus ended the first movement in favor of bringing out General Jackson for the presidency. Colonel Burr, I am well assured, had no agency in this, for it occurred some three months before the date of his letter to Governor Alston; nor was it put in motion by any combination of militant federalists and anti-Jeffersonians.

"As long as General Jackson remained in the military service of his country, little was said about bringing him out for the presidency. Having been appointed Governor of Florida by the President of the United States, he resigned his commission in the army about the first of June, 1821, and repaired forthwith to Pensacola, to receive the territory from the Spanish authorities. After organizing a territorial government, and putting it in operation, he withdrew from all public employment, and returned to Tennessee, where he expected to spend the rest of his life as a private citizen. Nor, indeed, was it believed by his friends that they would be blest with his society very long, as his health was at that time, and had been for six or seven years previous, very feeble, and his constitution apparently exhausted and broken down. No sooner, however, had he become a private citizen, and had set himself down once more upon his own beautiful estate, the Hermitage, than the eyes of his fellow-citizens were turned toward him, as having eminently entitled himself, by his brilliant and patriotic services, to the highest honors within the gift of a free and enlightened people.

"In Tennessee, and particularly at Nashville, his friends began now to speak of him as a candidate, and in good earnest to take the necessary steps to place his name prominently before the country. It is true that some four or five candidates were already in the field; but so confident were they of General Jackson's strength and popularity with the people, on account of his great public services, that they had no fears for the result. They not only, therefore, began to speak out upon the subject, but to make their wishes and intentions known through the public journals. The first demonstration of this latter method of supporting him was made January, 1822, in one of the Nashville papers. Soon afterward, the editor of the *Nashville Gazette*, Colonel Wilson, took the field openly and boldly for the General, as his candidate for the Presidency. The proposition was

cordially responded to by the people of Tennessee, and was also well received in other States, particularly so in the democratic and patriotic State of Pennsylvania. The inquiry now was, in what way shall his name be presented to the nation? The most imposing manner of bringing him forward and presenting to the other States of the Union, it was finally agreed, would be by the Legislature of his own State. This would not only give weight to the nomination, it was believed, but would show to the whole country that we were in earnest. It was determined, therefore, that the necessary steps should be taken to bring him forward at the next session of the Legislature.

"In these preliminary movements, it appears to me, you will be scarcely able to perceive any agency on the part either of Colonel Burr or the 'militant Federalists,' of whom so much is said. Nor had the officers of the army, whom he also represents as taking an active and leading part, anything to do with them. The truth is, they were the voluntary and spontaneous acts of his Tennessee friends, without the suggestions or promptings of any person or persons out of the State.

"About this time, spring of 1822, I left home on a visit to North Carolina to see the family of my father-in-law, Governor Montfort Stokes, who was then a Senator of Congress. The Governor had always belonged to the democratic party, and was one of its prominent and most influential leaders. His friendship and political support was, therefore, considered a matter of importance by those who were seeking favors at the hands of the people. What were his predilections at that time, in relation to the presidential aspirants, I knew not; but, as you may well suppose, I felt anxious to enlist him on the side of General Jackson. He had not returned from Washington at the time I reached his residence, but arrived soon afterward. During my continuance at his house, I had frequent conversations with him upon political subjects, and found him a warm, personal friend and admirer of General Jackson; but he gave not the slightest intimation that he preferred him for the presidency. This occasioned me some uneasiness, for I thought it a matter of very great importance, as it regarded the General's success in North Carolina that he should have the support of the Governor. I determined, therefore, to have a full and frank conversation with him before I left, upon the subject; and it was not long before I had an opportunity of doing so, and learning his opinions and views without reserve. He frankly remarked to me that so little had as yet been said about General Jackson as a candidate, he had not supposed it was seriously intended to run him, and asked me if such was really the intention of his friends.

"*'Unquestionably,'* I replied, and added that the Legislature of Tennessee would certainly nominate him at its next session.

“What support do his friends expect him to get?” he inquired, “if nominated?”

“I answered, ‘they expect him to be supported by the whole country.’”

“Then,” he facetiously replied, “he will certainly be elected.”

“Assuming then a graver air and tone, he said to me that he had known General Jackson from boyhood, he having read law with his brother when quite a youth, and that there was no living man he so much admired; but being already committed to the support of Mr. Calhoun, he could not advocate his election. This was very unwelcome news to me, but I can not say that it was altogether unexpected, for I was led to anticipate something of the sort from his silence, as regarded his preference, in my previous conversations with him. I then remarked:

“But suppose Mr. Calhoun should not be a candidate, can not you support the General as your next choice?”

“Yes,” he promptly replied, “with great pleasure;” but added that, at the same time, he had no reason to believe that anything could or would occur to prevent his being a candidate.

“Under such circumstances, this was all I had a right to expect or ask, and I parted with the Governor, when about to leave for Tennessee, fully satisfied that in case Mr. Calhoun should not be a candidate, he would go for General Jackson. In this I was not mistaken. The moment Mr. Calhoun was withdrawn by his Pennsylvania friends, the Governor rallied upon the General, and supported him with great energy and zeal. Having now the support of both General Polk and Governor Stokes, the two leaders, I may say, of the federal and democratic parties in North Carolina, his friends became confident of being able to carry that State for him. They were not mistaken: its vote was given to him by a large majority.

“I returned to Nashville about the first of June, and found the friends of the General in high spirits, and sanguine of success. Indeed, this feeling was not confined to Nashville: it pervaded the whole State. Under this state of things the legislature met, and, in a few days thereafter, the 20th July, 1822, adopted a preamble and resolutions which placed the General before the country as a legitimate candidate for the presidency. Being now formally nominated, his friends in every section of the Union entered into the contest with increased vigor and energy. But few of the federalists, however, took any part in it until after the publication in May, 1824, of the General’s celebrated letters to Mr. Monroe. Indeed, but few of them, if any, knew of their existence until then, though they, it has been alleged, had won their hearts as early as 1815. I should, however, except General William Polk, to whom I showed the letter of the 12th November, 1816, in the autumn of 1823, as before stated; and perhaps John Quincy Adams also, to whom Mr. Monroe, I have no doubt, showed both letters, which accounts, to my mind at least, for his having sustained the

General in his Seminole campaign with so much ability and zeal, in his dispatch to our Minister at Madrid.

"The General being now fairly out as a candidate, it was considered indispensable, in order to make his success the more certain, that the congressional caucus should be broken down. This was an engine of great political power, and had been used by the politicians of the country for twenty years in manufacturing Presidents, and unless it could be destroyed it would be difficult to overcome its influence upon those who had so long looked upon its nominees as the only true and legitimate party candidates. With a view to accomplish this object, Judges Overton and Haywood, both able and distinguished lawyers, opened a heavy and effective fire upon it in a series of well written numbers, which were published in the Nashville papers. These, with the attacks made upon it in other quarters, added to General Jackson's great personal popularity, contributed greatly, doubtless, to the overthrow of that renowned personage, 'King Caucus,' as it was then derisively called. It is true he mounted his throne again in the winter of 1823-'24, and nominated, as Mr. Monroe's successor, Mr. William H. Crawford; but his majesty had become powerless, and his nominee for the first time was badly beaten. This was the last time he ascended his throne, having died soon after of the wounds he received in the campaign of 1824, and has never been heard of since. Not even his ghost made its appearance in the presidential contest of 1828. It strikes me that you will be equally at a loss to perceive in all this any agency of either Colonel Burr, his militant federalists, or anti-Jeffersonians.

"As Tennessee was almost unanimous in favor of General Jackson, it might have been supposed that his friends would have had little or no trouble in that State after his nomination. Such, however, was not the fact. Colonel John Williams had been a Senator from our State in Congress for eight years, and as his term of service expired on the 3d of March, 1823, the legislature, which met in October of that year, had to elect a new Senator. Colonel Williams was a candidate for re-election; but being a personal and political enemy of General Jackson, it was determined, if possible, to defeat him, unless he would pledge himself to the support of the General for the presidency. This he refused to do, having already engaged to support Mr. Crawford. The General's friends had no alternative left them but to beat him, and this was no easy task. East Tennessee claimed the Senator, and the Colonel was a great favorite with the people of that end of the State. Besides, with the view of strengthening himself in other sections, soon after the elections in August were over, he mounted his horse and rode through the whole State, calling on the members-elect to the legislature, and obtaining promises from most of them to vote for him. They should not have thus committed themselves; but, having done so, the greater part of them were disposed to redeem



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their pledges, though admitting they had done wrong. The most devoted and zealous of the General's friends were determined, however, to leave no stone unturned to defeat his election. Several persons were spoken of as opposing candidates, but none of them could obtain, it was ascertained, the requisite number of votes. The General's old friend, Johnny Rhea, could come the nearest, but he lacked three votes. This was a very unpleasant state of things. To elect a bitter, personal enemy of General Jackson, and one who was known to be in favor of Mr. Crawford for the presidency, would have a most injurious effect, it was believed, upon his prospects. Notwithstanding he had been nominated by the legislature some fifteen months before, it was apprehended, if an enemy of his should be sent to the Senate, it would be difficult to make the other States believe that Tennessee was in earnest in her support of him. It would certainly have the appearance of great inconsistency, and well calculated to nullify the effect of his nomination.

"This could not be permitted, and it was resolved, at all hazards, to defeat the election of Colonel Williams. It became necessary now to play a bold and decisive game. As nobody else could be found to beat the Colonel, it was proposed to beat him with the *General himself*! This having been made known produced great uneasiness and alarm among the more timid members, from an apprehension that even he could not be elected; but Mr. Eaton and myself, who were on the ground, took upon ourselves the responsibility of the step, and insisted on his being nominated to the Legislature as a candidate for the Senate. We came to the conclusion that if the General must be politically sacrificed, it mattered little in what way it was done—whether by being defeated himself in the election of a United States Senator, or by the election of his bitter enemy! But I had no fear of his being defeated—I did not believe it possible that a majority of the members would be willing to take upon themselves the responsibility of voting against him. He was, accordingly, nominated to the Legislature by Major Maney, a highly respectable member from Williamson County—and he was elected, as I anticipated, by quite a large majority! Had he been beaten it might possibly have destroyed, or at least impaired, his prospects for the presidency; but his defeat, it was believed, would not be more blasting in its effect than the election of Colonel Williams under all the circumstances of the case.

"These are the reasons which induced the friends of General Jackson to send him to the United States Senate in the winter of 1823–24; which was thought by many of his friends at the time to have been rash and impolitic. The General himself was far from desiring it; but there was no help for it, and he submitted with a good grace. He was a soldier, and knew how to obey as well as to command! It is proper, however, to state that the members of the Legislature who were in favor of electing

Colonel Williams, declared themselves to be decidedly the friends of General Jackson ; but they maintained that to support the latter did not make it necessary to sacrifice the former. The active and most decided of the General's friends, however, differed with them in opinion. They had no doubt that to sustain Colonel Williams, under such circumstances, would be injurious to the prospects of the General for the presidency."

And so General Jackson was, at once, a Senator and a candidate for the presidency.

In connection with this interior view of his election to the Senate, the correspondence that passed between the General and one of the members of the Tennessee Legislature, previous to the election, has a certain interest. "All we want," said the member, "is a belief that you will permit your name to be used " To which General Jackson replied : "I have earnestly to request my friends, and beg of you, not to press me to an acceptance of the appointment. If appointed I could not decline, and yet, in accepting it, I should do great violence to my wishes and to my feelings. The length of time I have passed in public service authorizes me to make this request, which, with my friends, I trust, will be considered reasonable and proper."

Only twenty-five members of the Legislature ventured to vote against General Jackson for the senatorship ; and such was the power of his name in Tennessee, that of those twenty-five but three were re-elected to the next legislature. Indeed, his popularity exercised a despotic sway in some portions of the State. There were districts of Tennessee in which a man would scarcely have been safe who was known to have voted against him.

In the northern States, where the leading presses and politicians were already enlisted in behalf of Adams, Crawford, or Calhoun, these proceedings of the Tennessee legislature were received with a general pooh-pooh. "Great General, but unfit for civil employment." "The Tennesseans can not be in earnest." "Vice-President, perhaps ; but President—absurd !" "Adams and Jackson—that's the ticket !"

## CHAPTER II.

## KING CAUCUS DETHRONED.

A TERRIBLE affliction fell upon Mr. Crawford. In August, 1823, when he was fifty-one years of age, he was stricken with paralysis, which left him helpless, speechless, nearly blind, and scarcely conscious. He rallied a little in the course of the month, but he lay during the rest of the canvass a wreck of the once stalwart and vigorous Crawford, slowly, very slowly regaining his faculties. By the aid of a mechanical contrivance, he was just able to affix his signature to public documents, and thus retain his office of Secretary of the Treasury. He was removed ere long to a pleasant and retired cottage near Washington, the quiet of which was essential to the preservation of his life. There he lived for some months, visited only by his confidential clerk and his nearest friends. The very papers necessary to refute the calumnies of the campaign were written for him by subordinates in his office.

Prostrated thus on the last reach of the course, he had fallen with his face toward the goal, with his eyes and his heart fixed upon it. He could not give up the race. Then was seen the sorry spectacle of politicians contending, as it were, over the body of the stricken chief. The Crawford papers and partisans strove to conceal the calamity from the public, asserting in a hundred paragraphs that the attack had not been severe, and that the patient was rapidly recovering. Friends and organs of the rival candidates exaggerated the truth, if exaggeration were possible. Piteous attempts were made to *show* the afflicted man, by driving him, propped with cushions, about the streets of Washington. In January a formal bulletin of the attending physicians pronounced him free from disease, and on the way to certain,

though slow recovery. Mr. Cobb, however, his chief of friends, wrote, almost on the same day, to a confidential ally: "As an honest man, I am bound to admit that Crawford's health, though daily improving, affords cause for objection. He is very fat, but his speech and vision are imperfect, and the paralysis of his hand continues. His speech improves slowly. His right eye is so improved that he sees well enough to play whist as well as an old man without spectacles. His hand also gets stronger. Yet defect in all these members is but too evident."\*

The canvass raged on meanwhile. It was well to remove the sick man from the maddening excitements of a city where "every citizen was an electioneerer for the one party or the other, and every visitor within its walls was an active, working partisan." "The hotels," continues the author of 'Leisure Labors,' "were only so many caucus or club-rooms, in which to plan and direct the various schemes of party procedure. The drawing-rooms were thronged alike with the votaries of fashion and the satellites of the different champions; nor were these limited to the sterner sex. The theater was monopolized by one particular set of partisans in regular turn, as the most proper place for a public demonstration; but the artificial representations of the stage flagged and faded before the real exhibitions of the political drama. The legislative business of Congress received little or no attention. The members thought about nothing, talked about nothing, and wrote home about nothing but the presidential election."

During these months the questions agitated in all journals, all gatherings, were these: Will there be a congressional caucus? and, if yes, will the party accept its nominee? What a fire was kept up upon the pretensions of King Caucus, whose voice had once been so potential and unquestioned! All the candidates but Crawford were against the caucus. All the newspapers, except those devoted to Crawford, were

\* Cobb's Leisure Labors, p. 215.

against it. Several of the State legislatures adopted strong resolutions in reprehension of it. Public meetings denounced it. Ponderous essays were hurled at it; facetious squibs assailed it. Martin Van Buren and his friends strove mightily to stem the torrent, but it rolled on in ever-increasing strength.

A caucus, however, was destined to be held. On a certain day, early in February, 1824, appeared in the *National Intelligencer*, of Washington, two brief documents relating to the Bone of Contention. This was one :

"In consequence of the statements which have gone abroad in relation to a congressional nomination of candidates for President and Vice-President of the United States, the undersigned have been requested, by many of their republican colleagues and associates, to ascertain the number of members of Congress who deem it inexpedient at this time to make such a nomination, and to publish the same, for the information of the people of the United States.

"In compliance with this request, they have obtained from gentlemen representing the several States satisfactory information that of two hundred and sixty-one, the whole number of members composing the present Congress, there are one hundred and eighty-one who deem it inexpedient, under existing circumstances, to meet in caucus, for the purpose of nominating candidates for President and Vice-President of the United States; and they have good reasons to believe that a portion of the remainder will be found unwilling to attend such a meeting."

This paper was signed by twenty-four members of Congress, among whom were Colonel Richard M. Johnson, of Kentucky; Major Eaton, of Tennessee; Robert Y. Hayne, of South Carolina; S. D. Ingham, of Pennsylvania; George Kremer, of Pennsylvania; Sam Houston, of Tennessee; and J. R. Poinsett, of South Carolina.

The other document referred to was the following :

"The democratic members of Congress are invited to meet in the Representatives Chamber, at the Capitol, on the evening of the 14th of February, at 7 o'clock, to recommend candidates to the people of the United States for the offices of President and Vice-President of the United States."

This was signed by ten members, one of whom was John Forsyth. Mr. Van Buren did not sign it.

The caucus met at the time appointed, in the hall of the House of Representatives. A concession was made to public opinion and good policy so far as to admit spectators to the scene. This should be at least no "secret conclave," as the caucus had been styled. Accordingly, the doors were no sooner opened, than a crowd, dense and eager, rushed to the galleries, and filled them to overflowing. But, alas! there was no crowd upon the floor of the hall. By ones, and twos, and threes the members dropped in; counted, as they entered, by politicians in the galleries, note-book in hand; each accession hailed by the Crawford men with the delight of Mr. Crummels announcing to the mother of the Infant Phenomenon that another man had come into the pit. By seven o'clock—all had arrived who were coming, and the caucus was called to order. Sixty-six gentlemen were present, of whom two held the proxy of an absentee. A member, looking round upon the scene of empty chairs, which presented a rather ridiculous contrast to the surging show of heads in the galleries, moved to postpone the meeting until the next month, when a fuller assemblage might be expected.

Mr. Van Buren opposed the motion. It would be impossible, he said, to fix on any time that would be perfectly convenient and agreeable for all to attend. The people were anxiously waiting for a nomination, and he felt confident that a large portion of the republicans of the Union were decidedly in favor of this mode of nomination, and that it was quite time it should be made.

So the balloting was forthwith begun. The following was the result of the balloting for a presidential candidate: William H. Crawford, 64; John Quincy Adams, 2; Nathaniel Macon, 1; Andrew Jackson, 1. The balloting for a candidate for Vice-President immediately followed, with this result: Albert Gallatin, 57; John Q. Adams, 1; Erastus Root, 2; Samuel Smith, 1; William Eustis, 1; Wal-



ter Lowrie, 1; John Tod, 1; Rufus King, 1; Richard Rush, 1.

Crawford and Gallatin were then declared to be the candidates of the republican party; an announcement which the galleries received with faint applause and a few hisses—the latter led by a clerk from the war office, it was charged. At nine the caucus adjourned, to meet no more.

The caucus nominations infused new life into the friends of the rival candidates, and disheartened those of Crawford. The zealous Cobb himself confessed, in his confidential letters, that the result of the caucus had damaged the prospects of his friend, and the game was well-nigh desperate. Daniel Webster wrote to his brother Ezekiel: "The caucus has hurt nobody but its friends, as far as I can now judge. Mr. Adams' chance seems to increase, and he and General Jackson are likely to be the real competitors at last. General Jackson's manners are more presidential than those of any of the candidates. He is grave, mild, and reserved. My wife is for him decidedly." A few weeks later: "As to President, Jackson seems to be making head yet, Arbuthnot and Ambrister notwithstanding. The truth is, he is the people's candidate in a great part of the southern and western country. I hope all New England will support Mr. Calhoun for the vice-presidency. If so, he will probably be chosen, and that will be a great thing. He is a true man, and will do good to the country in that situation."

Even so. King Caucus was dethroned, and General Jackson was "making head."

The general pooh-pooh with which the announcement of Jackson's nomination by Tennessee had been received in the east and north, was very soon changed into apprehension, which fast became consternation. For lo! the great State of Pennsylvania began to show the most unequivocal preference for the "military chieftain"—Pennsylvania, upon which the friends of Mr. Calhoun had surely relied. An ominous scene had occurred in Carlisle, several weeks before the meeting of Mr. Crawford's caucus, which presaged coming events.

A large meeting, summoned by the friends of Calhoun, assembled in that town, and a series of resolutions were read, recommending Mr. Calhoun as Pennsylvania's candidate. The vote of the meeting was about to be taken, when a gentleman rose and quietly moved that the resolutions be amended by striking out the name of John C. Calhoun and inserting in its place that of Andrew Jackson. The assembly rose *en masse* and carried the amendment by acclamation.

Philadelphia took up the magical name. At a meeting called in Philadelphia to select delegates to a State nominating convention, Mr. George M. Dallas, who had been, up to this time, the advocate of Mr. Calhoun, proposed the name of Jackson ; saying that he did so only in deference to the known wishes of the people. The convention met at Harrisburg on the fourth of March, 1824, and made short work of the business before them. A spectator of the proceedings briefly writes : "Jonathan Roberts moved that the convention approve the nomination agreed upon at the caucus at Washington City. This motion was negatived, ayes 2 ; nays 123. He then moved that the electors be appointed without instructions to vote for any particular candidates as President and Vice-President. This motion was also lost—ayes 33 ; nays 92. Andrew Jackson was then nominated as the candidate for President, Jonathan Roberts being the only member of the convention who voted against him. John C. Calhoun was afterward nominated as the candidate for Vice-President. The vote stood thus—J. C. Calhoun, 87 ; Henry Clay, 10 ; A. Gallatin, 10 ; Wm. Findlay, 8 ; John Tod, 8 ; Daniel Montgomery, 1. Most of the above candidates except Mr. Calhoun, were voted for as Vice-President, by instruction ; and I am informed, that had there been a necessity for a second ballot, there would have been almost an unanimous vote for Mr. Calhoun, as Vice-President."

Mr. Calhoun was wise. He made a virtue of necessity, and withdrew his name from the list of presidential candidates in favor of General Jackson. The canvass was then

narrowed thus : Crawford and Gallatin ; Jackson and Calhoun ; Adams and Calhoun ; Clay and Nathan Sandford.\*

The action of Pennsylvania changed every thing. The Crawford men tried to keep up their original pooh-pooh, but deceived nobody.

The breaking down of the caucus system was not the unmixed blessing which it was hoped it would be. Like the English Reform Bill of a later day, the change was perfect in theory, but most imperfect in practice. It enlarged the sphere of intrigue. While King Caucus reigned, the contending influences were brought to a focus in the city of Washington, where, also, were usually gathered the rival aspirants. The game was snugger and cleaner than it was afterward, when every political center in the Union became a little Washington, and every drinking-house a nest of president-makers. Under the old system a man of talent, force, originality, and sincerity had a chance of becoming President ; under the new, all have a chance except such.

Every State was now a scene of eager contention. In Louisiana, Edward Livingston, who first conceived the scheme of running General Jackson for the presidency, was fighting over again the battle of New Orleans in behalf of his old commander. Colonel Thomas H. Benton, whose wife was a niece of Mrs. Clay, was striving with all his might to bring over the new State of Missouri to the support of the eloquent Kentuckian. Samuel Swartwout was assisting at Jackson meetings in New York, where the cause of the General had comparatively few adherents,† and where he was

\* A citizen of New York who had served a term or two in the Senate, and filled several high positions in the State.

† " A meeting was held last evening by the friends of General Jackson, at which General Lewis presided, and C. D. Colden, Esq. was secretary. After an address in favor of General Jackson by Mr. Swartwout, the resolutions were passed without opposition. As to the character of the assemblage, it was respectable, but with a very few exceptions composed of individuals of little political weight, the most of whom, indeed, appeared to have been attracted by curiosity and were wholly indifferent to the proceedings. We should except, however, from this remark, many of those who have been hitherto known as the warm personal friends of Mr. Clinton, who were zealous, if not weighty, in the cause."—*New York paper, April 10th, 1824.*

still talked of as a suitable candidate for the Vice-Presidency on the ticket headed by John Quincy Adams.

It became gradually apparent to the knowing few, that the State of New York was to be the real battle-ground in this contest. Mr. Van Buren soon discovered that Crawford was not the choice of New York, and that nothing but the strictness of party discipline could procure him the electoral vote of that State. Presidential electors in New York had been hitherto nominated by the Legislature, a plan that gave a fine field for the operations of the party manager. A desperate effort was now made to change the system, and give the choice of electors to the people. The friends of Crawford, however, succeeded in defeating the proposed change, and kept the game, for the moment, in their own hands.

Great clamor had arisen from the nomination for the Vice-Presidency of Mr. Albert Gallatin, who was not a native of the United States. One of the ten thousand paragraphs aimed at this nomination suggested for the presidency another American citizen of foreign birth, Talleyrand. "By electing these two distinguished citizens of the world, as the chief magistrates of this nation, we shall give the most conclusive proof of our entire freedom from ancient prejudices that any people ever gave: our local feuds will be stanch'd, and the caucus party will be doubly gratified in finding two cosmopolites chosen by the American people instead of one."

The Crawford men yielded to the clamor, and Mr. Gallatin was induced formally to withdraw his name from the list of competitors.\* This movement certainly increased Mr. Calhoun's chances for the vice-presidency, but had small effect upon the prospects of Mr. Crawford.

If any man in the world could have carried the State of

\* The following was Mr. Gallatin's brief letter of withdrawal:

FAYETTE COUNTY, PA., OCT. 2, 1824.

Understanding that the withdrawal of my name may have a favorable effect on the result of the approaching election of President and Vice-President of the United States, I request that I may no longer be considered as a candidate for the office of Vice-President.

ALBERT GALLATIN.

New York against Mr. Adams and General Jackson, Mr. Van Buren was that man. He had a powerful inducement to exertion. The New York American was not far out of the way when it remarked, that "The apparent question now before the public is, who shall be our next President? but the real question is, whether Martin Van Buren shall be President of the United States on and after the 4th of March, 1833?" The American explains its meaning thus: "At that time, the great State of New York, having never furnished a President, will have irresistible claims to that honor. If any of her citizens are now qualified, the blossoms of eternity, fast gathering on their heads, will have fallen, they will be superannuated, that is, they will have passed the age of sixty years, that gloomy period, when the Constitution of New York declares that judges lose their senses, and that all flesh is grass. In that day Mr. Van Buren will be in the full strength of life, the only New Yorker fit for the Presidency."

These slight indications of the nature of the presidential campaign of 1824, will enable the reader to follow understandingly the personal movements of General Jackson; to whom we now return.

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## CHAPTER III.

### GENERAL JACKSON IN THE SENATE.

"ANDREW JACKSON, appointed a Senator by the Legislature of the State of Tennessee for the term of six years, commencing on the fourth day of March last, produced his credentials, was qualified, and took his seat."

December 5th, 1823, is the date of this entry in the journal of the Senate. Twenty-six years had passed away since last Andrew Jackson had pressed the senatorial morocco; during which period the number of senators had increased

from thirty-two to forty-eight. And again, as we look down the list of names, we are astonished to observe how few of them are known to the present generation. Rufus King, Martin Van Buren, Nathaniel Macon, John Branch, Robert Y. Hayne, Richard M. Johnson, John M. Eaton, Thomas H. Benton, are all the names universally remembered at the present day. In the House of Representatives were Henry Clay, Daniel Webster, C. C. Cambreleng, Egbert Ten Eyck, Stephen Van Rensselaer, James Buchanan, Samuel D. Ingham, Louis McLane, John Randolph, William C. Rives, Andrew Stephenson, Willie P. Mangum, George McDuffie, Joel R. Poinsett, John Forsyth, Sam Houston, Elisha Whittlesy, Edward Livingston. The delegate from the Territory of Florida was Richard K. Call, General Jackson's former aid-de-camp.

The session lasted six months, and General Jackson sat it nearly out. He made four speeches of about two minutes each ; one in which he testified to the valor and good service of an officer who had fought at New Orleans ; the others brief explanations respecting a projected road in Florida. He voted, however, on almost every question that came to a division.

He voted for the construction of that Florida road, on the ground that it was necessary to the defense of the Territory. He voted for the abolition of imprisonment for debt. He voted against reducing the duty upon imported iron ; against reducing the duty upon cotton goods ; against reducing the duty upon wool and woollen goods ; against increasing the duty on India silks ; against removing the duty on cotton bagging ; for lowering the duty on blankets ; for removing the duty of "four cents per pound" on frying-pans.

For the sake of economizing space, it may may be stated here, that during the two sessions of General Jackson's service in the Senate he voted in the affirmative on the passage of the following internal-improvement bills : A bill authorizing a road from Memphis in Tennessee to Little Rock in Arkan-

sas ; a bill for making a road in Florida ; a bill to procure necessary surveys for roads and canals ; a bill to improve the navigation of the Mississippi, Ohio, and Missouri ; a bill for making a road in Missouri ; a bill to subscribe to the stock in the Chesapeake and Delaware Canal Company ; a bill to extend the Cumberland road to Zanesville ; a bill authorizing a subscription to the Portland and Louisville Canal Company.

The great topic of the session was the tariff. General Jackson, as his votes show, was a tariff man—an advocate of the system of “protecting” native industry by the imposition of high duties upon the importation of manufactured articles. We are not left to the testimony of General Jackson’s votes on this question. While the revision of the tariff was proceeding in Congress, Dr. L. H. Colman, a member of the Virginia Legislature, wrote to General Jackson, asking his opinion upon the subject. This correspondence was very famous in its day, and won votes for General Jackson even from anti-tariff men—the General’s candor and boldness atoning for his alleged heterodoxy of opinion.

DR. COLMAN TO GENERAL JACKSON.

“WARRENTON, VA., April 21st, 1824.

‘DEAR SIR: Being one of the six members of the Virginia Assembly in the caucus last winter who voted for you as a fit and proper person to be supported by the people of the State for the presidency of the United States, and having since heard that you are in favor of the “*protecting duty policy*,” I take the liberty of desiring you to inform me whether you intend voting for the Tariff Bill now before Congress. I wish to have information on the subject as soon as your convenience will permit, that I may answer the Fredericksburg Committee who invite my coöperation in getting up a ticket for the Hero of New Orleans. In this county you have many friends, and some think your support will be better in Petersburg than in any of the contiguous counties. We are anti-Tariff here; and candor requires me to say that should you be the advocate of a measure to which our interest is evidently opposed—the zeal with which you have been hitherto supported will be relaxed.

“I am, &c.,

L. H. COLMAN.”

## GENERAL JACKSON TO DR. COLMAN.

"WASHINGTON CITY, April 26th, 1824.

"SIR: I have had the honor this day to receive your letter of the 21st instant, and with candor shall reply to it. My name has been brought before the nation by the people themselves without any agency of mine: for I wish it not to be forgotten that I have never solicited office, nor when called upon by the constituted authorities have ever declined where I conceived my services would be beneficial to my country. But as my name has been brought before the nation for the first office in the gift of the people, it is incumbent on me, when asked, frankly to declare my opinion upon any political or national question pending before and about which the country feels an interest.

"You ask me my opinion on the Tariff. I answer, that I am in favor of a judicious examination and revision of it; and so far as the Tariff before us embraces the design of fostering, protecting, and preserving within ourselves the means of national defense and independence, particularly in a state of war, I would advocate and support it. The experience of the late war ought to teach us a lesson; and one never to be forgotten. If our liberty and republican form of government, procured for us by our revolutionary fathers, are worth the blood and treasure at which they were obtained, it surely is our duty to protect and defend them. Can there be an American patriot, who saw the privations, dangers, and difficulties experienced for the want of a proper means of defense during the last war, who would be willing again to hazard the safety of our country if embroiled; or rest it for defense on the precarious means of national resources to be derived from commerce, in a state of war with a maritime power which might destroy that commerce to prevent our obtaining the means of defense, and thereby subdue us? I hope there is not; and if there is, I am sure he does not deserve to enjoy the blessing of freedom.

"Heaven smiled upon, and gave us liberty and independence. That same providence has blessed us with the means of national independence and national defense. If we omit or refuse to use the gifts which He has extended to us, we deserve not the continuation of His blessings. He has filled our mountains and our plains with minerals—with lead, iron, and copper, and given us a climate and soil for the growing of hemp and wool. These being the grand materials of our national defense, they ought to have extended to them adequate and fair protection, that our own manufactories and laborers may be placed on a fair competition with those of Europe; and that we may have within our own country a supply of those leading and important articles so essential to war. Beyond this, I look at the Tariff with an eye to the proper distribution of labor and revenue; and with a view to discharge our national debt. I am one of those who do not believe that a national debt is a national blessing, but rather a curse to



a republic; inasmuch as it is calculated to raise around the administration a moneyed aristocracy dangerous to the liberties of the country.

"This Tariff—I mean a judicious one—possesses more fanciful than real dangers. I will ask what is the real situation of the agriculturalist? Where has the American farmer a market for his surplus products? Except for cotton he has neither a foreign nor a home market. Does not this clearly prove, when there is no market either at home or abroad, that there is too much labor employed in agriculture? and that the channels of labor should be multiplied? Common sense points out at once the remedy. Draw from agriculture the superabundant labor, employ it in mechanism and manufactures, thereby creating a home market for your breadstuffs, and distributing labor to a most profitable account, and benefits to the country will result. Take from agriculture in the United States six hundred thousand men, women, and children, and you at once give a home market for more breadstuffs than all Europe now furnishes us. In short, sir, we have been too long subject to the policy of the British merchants. It is time we should become a little more *Americanized*; and instead of feeding the paupers and laborers of Europe, feed our own, or else in a short time, by continuing our present policy, we shall all be paupers ourselves.

"It is, therefore, my opinion that a careful Tariff is much wanted to pay our national debt, and afford us the means of that defense within ourselves on which the safety and liberty of our country depend; and last, though not least, give a proper distribution to our labor, which must prove beneficial to the happiness, independence, and wealth of the community.

"This is a short outline of my opinions, generally, on the subject of your inquiry, and believing them correct and calculated to further the prosperity and happiness of my country, I declare to you I would not barter them for any office or situation of a temporal character that could be given me.

"I have presented you my opinions freely, because I am without concealment, and should indeed despise myself if I could believe myself capable of acquiring the confidence of any by means so ignoble.

"I am, sir, very respectfully your obedient servant,

"ANDREW JACKSON."

Did Henry Clay ever deliver a speech, or Horace Greeley write an editorial article, more completely pervaded with the spirit of the protective policy, than this letter of Andrew Jackson? The General really exhausted the subject. Not an argument escaped him.

The residence of General Jackson this winter at the seat

of government rendered him an object of attentions peculiarly flattering. On New Year's day, we read in the *Intelligencer*, Mr. Custis, of Arlington, in the presence of a numerous company, presented him with the pocket-telescope carried by General Washington during the revolutionary war. "General Jackson received the relic," says the reporter, "in a manner peculiarly impressive, which showed that however time, hard service, and infirmity may have impaired a frame no longer young, the heart was still entire, and alive to the heroic and generous feelings of the soldier, the patriot, and the friend."

The eighth of January was celebrated this year with unusual zest in all parts of the country. At Washington, as we have before recorded, General Jackson figured at a grand ball given in honor of the occasion by the Secretary of State. In the morning of the same day another interesting gift was bestowed upon the General—the pistols of General Washington, which had been given him by Lafayette. Charles F. Mercer, of the House of Representatives, accompanied by Mr. Van Rensselaer, waited upon the General at his lodgings, and addressed him in these words :

"GENERAL: Allow me to fulfill the request of a friend and constituent, Mr. Wm. Robinson, of Sudley, one of the legatees of General George Washington, by delivering to you the arms that he wore during many of the vicissitudes of that revolution which conducted him to the summit of renown and our country to independence.

"They were the gift of his distinguished pupil, Lafayette, and they associate the name of the steadiest friend of liberty in the old, with the memory of her most distinguished champion in the new world.

"Another interest will be imparted to these arms. In becoming yours on this day, they are destined to multiply the memorials of the most brilliant and extraordinary achievement in the military annals of this eventful age."

And yet another pageant of similar nature awaited him, of which the papers of the day give glowing accounts. The General's own simple, brief allusion to it, in a letter to his nephew, Andrew Jackson Donelson, will better please the

reader : “ Yesterday,” he wrote on the 16th of March, “ being my birth-day, and having entered upon my fifty-eighth year, I had a few friends to dine with me, and the evening was spent agreeably. Thus I have entered my fifty-eighth year. How I may end it is for Providence to decide. To-day, at eleven o’clock A. M., I was notified by the President to attend him, that he might present me with the medal voted by Congress on the 27th of February, 1815. Accordingly, attended by Major Eaton, General Cobb, and Mr. E. Livingston, I waited upon him, when, in the presence of the heads of departments, the ladies of the heads of departments, the ladies of the executive head, *cum multis alios*,\* in due form and pomp, it was presented. Of all things I hate to speak of myself, and these parades and pomp are most disagreeable to me ; you will see it all in print, and to that I refer you.”†

Early in the session mysterious whispers began to be circulated in Washington that a correspondence had passed, some years before, between General Jackson and Mr. Monroe, which, if published, would prove the General more than half a federalist, and blast his prospects of the presidency. The whispers found their way into print. So much was said and written respecting the correspondence that the whole nation was on the *qui vive* respecting it, and its publication was universally demanded. George Kremer, of Pennsylvania, a member of the House of Representatives, devoted to Jackson, wrote to the General, asking him if he had ever expressed the federal sentiments attributed to him.

“ No,” replied the General. “ My advice to the President was, that in the selection of his Cabinet, he should act upon principles like these : consider himself the head of a nation, not of a party ; that he should have around him the best talents the country could afford, without regard to the sectional divisions ; and should, in his selection, seek after men of probity, virtue, capacity, and firmness ; and in this way

\* So in the original.

† Autograph collection of H. C. Van Schaach, Manlius, N. Y.

he would go far to eradicate those feelings which, on former occasions, threw so many obstacles in the way of government, and be enabled, perhaps, to unite a people heretofore politically divided."

The correspondence was published. It was read with extreme interest, and made an impression upon the people most favorable to General Jackson's success. One unlucky passage, however, called forth adverse comment. General Jackson said in one of his letters that if he had been in command of the eastern division of the army when the Hartford convention met, he would have brought its members to court-martial. The *Boston Gazette* retorted: "If this Hotspur of the South had been commander of the military department where the Hartford convention sat, it would have been the last act of his life to have interfered with that body; all the forces the general government ever provided for the sea coast defense in New England could not for a moment have contended with the train bands of the smallest district. Had he attempted to punish even the doorkeeper of the Hartford convention, he would, like Haman, have found himself elevated on the gallows he had erected for others; for among these quiet spirits, deliberating for the public good, were men whose pluck was not inferior to his own; and who, if they were less fierce, were not less firm."

Notwithstanding many little hits of this nature, it is evident from the political writings of that day, and of subsequent times, that no single event of the campaign of 1824 won General Jackson so many votes as the publication of the Monroe correspondence. There are federalists still living who well remember laying down the newspaper containing it with the feeling that a second Washington had come to judgment. The reader has but to turn back and glance over the General's principal letter, in order to see how transporting it must have been to the moderate, the conservative, the respectable voter of 1824; and, above all, to the remnant of the old federal party, "proscribed" for twenty years.

Amid the hurly-burly in which General Jackson lived this

winter, was he an indifferent spectator? I have before me several of his private letters, written to confidential friends at this stage of the struggle, which may serve to reveal his feelings :

GENERAL JACKSON TO CAPT. JOHN DONELSON, SEN.

" CITY OF WASHINGTON, Feb. 9th, 1824.

" DEAR SIR: . . . . . The presidential question begins to agitate the minds of the people much. The attempt of a small minority of the members of Congress to get up a caucus and force public opinion to take up a particular candidate, will still agitate it more, and I trust will eventuate in prostrating the caucus system altogether. Should the people suffer themselves to be dictated to by designing demagogues, who carry on everything by intrigue and management, they can not expect to see their present happy government perpetuated. It must sink under the scenes of corruption that will be practiced under such a system; and, in time, open bribery may, and I have no doubt will be resorted to, to obtain a seat in the presidential chair, if the people do not assume their rights of choosing a President themselves.

" In this contest I take no part. I have long since prepared my heart to say with heart-felt submission, ' May the Lord's will be done ! ' If it is intended by Providence that I should fill the presidential chair, I will submit to it with all humility, and endeavor to labor four years with an eye single to the public good, imploring the guidance of Providence in all things. But be assured, it will be an event that I never wished, nor expected. My only ambition was to spend the remainder of my days in domestic retirement, with my little family. It has turned out otherwise, to my great annoyance. Still, I submit with proper resignation. I thank you for your kind attention to Mrs. J. Be good enough to continue your attention to her. Present me respectfully to your good lady, Emily, and little family, and believe me your friend,

" ANDREW JACKSON."

GENERAL JACKSON TO MAJOR WM. B. LEWIS.

" CITY OF WASHINGTON, Feb. 22d, 1824.

" DEAR MAJOR: . . . . . Mr. Crawford's friends have become desperate, and will do any thing—their motto, the end is worthy of the means. Their minority caucus has recoiled upon their own heads, and the unanimity of Pennsylvania has defeated all their plans. I refer you to the newspapers for the current news of the day. Wonder not if you see the attempts made to make me a federalist. The proof—a letter I wrote to Mr. Monroe in 1816 or '17. You no doubt recollect it. It was

copied by you; wrote to bring into the war department Col. Drayton, who served throughout the late war. By some means, Mr. Monroe's letter in answer to mine has got into their hands, Mr. Monroe says by stealth; and I have no doubt but all my private letters are also in their hands. But one thing I know, that the opinions expressed are the true republican course; and men, call them what you will, who risk life, health, and their all in defense of their country, are its real support, and are entitled to share the offices of the government. Col. Drayton was said to be a federalist before the war. I can say truly of such that we are all federalists, we are all republicans; and I would to God we had less professions and more acts of real patriotism.

"I am truly crowded with various business; I beg you to tender me affectionately to your sister, your daughter, and kiss the babes for me.

"I had not influence enough to obtain the mission to Mexico for our friend, General Stokes. As soon as I found we could not succeed with General Crabb, I threw my weight in the General's scale. I am disgusted with the manner and means all things are carried on here. When I was told that General Stokes could not be appointed because he dissipated sometimes at a card-table, I then tried Mr. Baldwin, with as little effect as any other. Governor Edmonds, of Illinois, is before the Senate. I write in haste and for your own eye. Your friend,

"ANDREW JACKSON."

GENERAL JACKSON TO MAJOR WM. B. LEWIS.

"WASHINGTON, March 31st, 1824.

"DEAR MAJOR: . . . . On the subject of Mr. Calhoun, I have no doubt myself but his friends acted agreeable to his understanding and instructions, and that he is sincere in his wishes. Some have doubted this, but I have not; and I can give you, when we meet, reasons that will convince you I can not be mistaken. As far as his friends to the south have acted, it is conformable to this, and I have no doubt but both the Carolinas will unite in my support. You have seen the result of Pennsylvania. New York is coming out, and, it is said, some of the New England States. A few weeks will give us the result of the movement of New York. If Crawford is not supported in that State, I have but little doubt but he will be dropped, and, from what you will see in the *National Intelligencer* of this morning, Mr. Clay taken up. I have no doubt if I was to travel to Boston, where I have been invited, that it would insure my election. But this I can not do; I would feel degraded the balance of my life. If I ever fill that office, it must be the free choice of the people. I can then say I am the President of the nation, and my acts shall comport with that character.

"I am so constantly engaged with visitors that I have but little time

to write, except in the night. You must, therefore, pardon this hasty scrawl.

“Present me to the young ladies, and accept my best wishes for your health and happiness, and believe me your friend,

“ANDREW JACKSON.”

GENERAL JACKSON TO COLONEL GEORGE WILSON.

“WASHINGTON, April 17th, 1824.

“DEAR SIR: Yours of the 2d instant is received. . . . The vote in the House of Representatives was yesterday taken, after ten weeks debate, on the Tariff, and passed, one hundred and seven ayes, and one hundred and two noes. What may be its fate in the Senate I can not say.

“It is well known that I am in favor of the general principle of the bill—that I am in favor of encouraging by a fair competition the manufactory of the national means of defense within ourselves; and not to depend in time of war to procure those means from the precarious source of commerce, which must always be interrupted by war, and, as in the last war, could not be obtained, and when obtained it was at a war price, to the great injury of the treasury. I am for pursuing a plan that will insure our national defense and national independence, encourage our agricultural portion of the community, and with it manufactures and commerce as the handmaids of agriculture, and look to the Tariff—after these objects are obtained—with an eye to revenue, to meet and extinguish our national debt. This is my course: my conscience tells me it is right, and I will pursue it.

“It is strange to me to hear men who once agreed that a national debt was a national curse, now advocate the policy of meeting it by loans, rather than levy an impost to pay it. I individually have always thought this was an improper course to pursue with my private debts; and, as nations are a composition of individuals, I can not believe, when applied to them, it is a wholesome rule. I am therefore opposed to prolong the payment of our national debt, and thereby raise up in our country a moneyed aristocracy dangerous to our liberty.

“How long the Tariff bill may be before the Senate I can not say; so soon as it is disposed of, and some other bills, I intend leaving here.

“The papers will have given you the news of the late policy of the State of New York. The feelings of the people are aroused, and can not be allayed until their vengeance reaches those representatives who, they believe, have attempted to sell them for promised office. New Jersey, it is believed, will follow Pennsylvania. Virginia has taken a stand against the caucus, and her State elections are canvassed on that ground. In London a Mr. Osborn has been elected by a large majority on this avowed

principle. It is even now doubtful whether Mr. Crawford will get Virginia. . . . I write in haste, and for your own eye. Accept a tender of my good wishes, and believe me your friend,

“ANDREW JACKSON.”

GENERAL JACKSON TO COLONEL GEORGE WILSON.

“HERMITAGE, August 18th, 1824.

“DEAR COLONEL: I received last evening by mail the inclosed letter. I send it for your perusal. I have not seen the paper of Richie, of the 20th ultimo, alluded to; can not, therefore, judge of the necessity or propriety of giving any notice to this publication. Was I to notice the falsehoods and false insinuations of Richie and such unprincipled editors,\* I could have time for nothing else. Should you, upon reference to the piece alluded to, think it deserves any notice, such a one as the following might be proper: That General Jackson's course requires neither falsehood nor intrigue to support it. He has been brought before the nation by the people, without his knowledge, wishes, or consent. His support is the people. And so long as they choose to support him, as to himself he will not interfere. He will neither resign his pretensions, intrigue, nor combine with any man nor set of men, nor has he ever so combined or intrigued. Mr. Richie may, therefore, be calm. The General or his friends will never adopt the course of intrigue, combination, and corruption pursued by Mr. Richie and his political friends, for any purpose whatever. Their cause requires neither falsehood nor corruption to support it. It is the people's cause. They have brought A. J. before the nation.

“I am very respectfully your friend,

ANDREW JACKSON.”

These letters exhibit our candidate in an honorable light. If any one should say, with Hamlet's mother, the gentleman “doth protest too much,” we might reply, that like all candidates he was the object of ceaseless attack. Nor did any man ever run for the presidency who was, at every moment of the canvass, entirely worthy of himself.

\* “General Jackson is elected to the Senate. He was the only man in Tennessee who could out turn John Williams. He has done it. The country may yet rue the change.”—*Richmond Inquirer*, November, 1823.



## CHAPTER IV.

## SENATOR JACKSON BURIES THE TOMAHAWK.

GENERAL JACKSON was in excellent spirits and high good humor during the whole of this contest. His friends assured him that his success was certain, and they believed it was so. He could see for himself that no name had such power with the masses of the people as his. He lived in a cloud of incense.

In the course of the winter he was reconciled to several gentlemen whom he had been long wont to reckon in the catalogue of his foes. General Winfield Scott was in Washington at the beginning of the session; and, desirous to know what he had to expect in case he should meet General Jackson, addressed to him the following note: "Sir, one portion of the American community has long attributed to you the most distinguished magnanimity, and the other portion the greatest desperation in your resentments—am I to conclude that both are equally in error? I allude to circumstances which have transpired between us, and which need not here be recapitulated, and to the fact that I have now been six days in your immediate vicinity without having attracted your notice. As this is the first time in my life that I have been within a hundred miles of you, and as it is barely possible that you may be ignorant of my presence, I beg leave to state that I shall not leave the District before the morning of the 14th instant."

To this General Jackson returned the following answer: "Sir, your letter of to-day has been received. Whether the world are correct or in error, as regards my 'magnanimity,' is for the world to decide. I am satisfied of one fact, that when you shall know me better, you will not be disposed to harbor the opinion, that any thing like 'desperation in resentment' attaches to me. Your letter is ambiguous: but,

concluding from occurrences heretofore, that it was written with friendly views, I take the liberty of saying to you, that whenever you shall feel disposed to meet me on friendly terms, that disposition will not be met by any other than a corresponding feeling on my part.”\*

The two Generals met soon afterward, exchanged friendly salutations, and remained on terms of civility for several years.

A still more unexpected reconciliation was that which occurred between Mr. Clay and General Jackson. Mr. Clay himself tells the story :† “ My personal acquaintance with General Jackson commenced in the fall of 1815, at the city of Washington. Prior to that time I had never seen him. Our intercourse was then friendly and cordial. He engaged to pass a week of the ensuing summer at my residence in Kentucky. During that season I received a letter from him, communicating his regret that he was prevented from visiting me. I did not again see him until the session of Congress, at which the events of the Seminole war were discussed. He arrived at Washington in the midst of the debate, and after the delivery, but before the publication, of the first speech, which I pronounced on that subject. Waiving all ceremony, I called to see him, intending by the visit to evince, on my part, that no opinion, which a sense of duty had compelled me to express of his public conduct, ought to affect our personal intercourse. My visit was not returned, and I was subsequently told that he was in the habit of indulging in the bitterest observations upon most of those—myself among the number—who had called in question the propriety of his military conduct in the Seminole war. I saw no more of him, except possibly at a distance, during the same winter, in this city, until the summer of the year 1819. Being, in that summer, on my way from New Orleans to Lexington, and traveling the same road on which he was passing, in the

\* Mansfield's Life of General Scott. p. 175.

† Address to the Public, 1828, p. 22.

opposite direction, from Lexington to Nashville, we met at Lebanon, Kentucky, where I had stopped at breakfast. I was sitting at the door, in the shade, reading a newspaper, when the arrival of General Jackson and his suite was announced. As he ascended the steps, and approached me, I rose and saluted him in the most respectful manner. He darted by me, slightly inclining his head, and abruptly addressing me. He was followed by some of his suite, who stopped and conversed with me some time, giving me the latest information of my family. I afterward learnt that General Jackson accompanied President Monroe, in a visit to my family, and partook of some slight refreshment at my house. On leaving the tavern at Lebanon, I had occasion to go into a room where I found General Jackson seated, reading a newspaper, and I retired, neither having spoken to the other, and pursued my journey, in company with four or five traveling companions.

“Such was the state of our relations, at the commencement of the session of Congress in 1823, the interval having passed without my seeing him. Soon after his arrival here to attend that session, I collected from certain indications, that he had resolved upon a general amnesty, the benefit of which was to be extended to me. He became suddenly reconciled with some individuals, between whom and himself there had been a long-existing enmity. The greater part of the Tennessee delegation—all, I believe, except Mr. Eaton and General Cocke—called on me together, early in the session, for the express purpose, as I understood, of producing a reconciliation between us. I related in substance all of the above circumstances, including the meeting at Lebanon. By way of apology for this conduct at Lebanon, some of the gentlemen remarked, that he did not intend any disrespect to me, but that he was laboring under some indisposition. I stated that the opinions which I had expressed in the House of Representatives, in regard to General Jackson’s military transactions, had been sincerely entertained, and were still held, but that, being opinions in respect to public acts, they

never had been supposed by me to form any just occasion for private enmity between us, and that none had been cherished on my part. Consequently, there was, on my side, no obstacle to a meeting with him, and maintaining a respectful intercourse. For the purpose of bringing us together, the Tennessee representatives, all of whom, according to my recollection, boarded at Mrs. Claxton's, on Capitol Hill, gave a dinner, to which we were both invited, and at which, I remember, Mr. Senator White, then acting as a commissioner under the Florida treaty, and others, were present. We there met, exchanged salutations, and dined together. I retired from the table early, and was followed to the door by General Jackson and Mr. Eaton, who insisted on my taking a seat in their carriage. I rode with them, and was set down at my lodgings. I was afterward invited by General Jackson to dine with him, where I met Mr. Adams, Mr. Calhoun, Mr. Southard, and many other gentlemen, chiefly members of Congress. He also dined, in company with fifteen or eighteen members of Congress, at my lodgings, and we frequently met, in the course of the winter, always respectfully addressing each other."

But the most remarkable case of reconciliation was that which occurred between General Jackson and Colonel Thomas H. Benton, whose brother Jesse's bullet General Jackson still carried about with him, embedded in the flesh of his left arm. "Well," exclaimed Colonel Benton, in one of his letters of this period, "how many changes in this life! General Jackson is now sitting in the chair next to me. There was a vacant one next to me, and he took it for the session. Several Senators saw our situation, and offered mediation. I declined it upon the ground that what had happened could neither be explained, recanted, nor denied. After this, we were put upon the same committee. Facing me one day, as we sat in our seats, he said to me, 'Colonel, we are on the same committee; I will give you notice when it is necessary to attend.' (He was chairman, and had the right to summon us.) I answered, 'General, make the time suit yourself; it

will be convenient for me to attend at any time.' In committee we did business together just as other persons. After that, he asked me how my wife was, and I asked him how his was. Then he called and left his card at my lodgings—Andrew Jackson for Colonel Benton and lady ; forthwith I called at his and left mine—Colonel Benton for General Jackson. Since then we have dined together at several places, and yesterday at the President's. I made him the first bow, he held forth his hand, and we shook hands. I then introduced him to my wife, and thus civil relations are perfectly established between us. Jackson has gained since he has been here, by his mild and conciliatory manner."\*

Brother Jesse, however, who still lived near Nashville, burned with as furious a wrath against General Jackson as when, in 1813, he had laid him low with his pistol. He came out, during the summer of 1814, with a campaign pamphlet, in which he accused the General of every known offense against Divine and human laws. His charges were thirty-two in number. He accused the General of having promised offices ; of having electioneered for himself ; of abandoning the interests of the South by voting for the new tariff bill ; of cringing, in the city of Washington, to all his former enemies ; of being a cock-fighter and racer ; of being a fomentor of quarrels and a promoter of duels ; of having assailed Governor Sevier when the latter was unarmed ; of having been in league with Aaron Burr ; of having threatened to cut off the ears of Senator Eppes ; of having unlawfully put to death John Woods, and the six militiamen ; and of various other crimes and misdemeanors, to the number of thirty-two.

This pamphlet, though received in Tennessee with general ridicule, was published in many of the Crawford papers in the Northern and Eastern States, and was calculated to draw votes from General Jackson. Lieutenant Andrew Jackson Donelson and Major Lewis wrote elaborate and able replies, which they sent flying in the wake of the Bentonian missive.

\* Catalogue of General Jackson's Juvenile Indiscretions, p. 8.

General Jackson was at home again in June. The Hermitage was more like a hotel than a home during the summer, so numerous were the guests whom curiosity, friendship, or political business brought to it.

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## CHAPTER V.

### THE RESULT OF THE CAMPAIGN.

THE result of the strife which was known before the end of the year, it is necessary for us to understand precisely. Else we shall not be able to judge correctly the subsequent events.

John C. Calhoun was elected Vice-President by a great majority. He received 182 electoral votes out of 261. All New England voted for him except Connecticut and one electoral district of New Hampshire. Connecticut gave her eight (vice-presidential) votes for Andrew Jackson ; New Hampshire, one vote ; Maryland, one vote ; Missouri, her three votes. So that General Jackson received thirteen electoral votes for the vice-presidency, and was the choice of two entire States for that office—Connecticut and Missouri. Virginia gave her twenty-four votes for Nathaniel Macon ; Ohio gave her whole sixteen for Nathan Sandford of New York ; Kentucky her whole seven, and New York seven. Georgia voted entire for Martin Van Buren, giving him nine electoral votes. Little Delaware preferred Henry Clay for the second office, giving him two electoral votes out of three. So much for the vice-presidency. The result was a triumph for Mr. Calhoun, placed him in a commanding position before the country, and seemed to open the way to the easy and speedy attainment of the highest office. He held such cards, it was thought, that the game of 1832, or at latest 1836, was his own.

Now, for the presidency. For William H. Crawford, only two States cast their individual vote, Georgia and Virginia. New York gave him five votes out of thirty-six ; Maryland, one vote out of eleven ; Delaware two out of three. His vote stood thus : Virginia, 24 ; Georgia, 9 ; New York, 5 ; Delaware, 2 ; Maryland, 1 ; total, 41. Forty-one out of two-hundred and sixty-one ! New York had bolted then. Dr. Hammond expresses the opinion, that if the electoral law, conceding the choice of electors to the people, had been passed by the friends of Crawford, the State could have been made to give a majority to that candidate. "I sincerely believe," he says, "that the discipline of party, the charm of names, and the high character and real merit of Mr. Crawford, together with the horror which at that time was felt, whenever Clintonianism or federalism was mentioned, would have ensured a triumph to the Crawford party." Another proof, adds the worthy historian, that "in public as well as in private transactions, ultimate success is most effectually secured by frankness and candor ; and that, in politics, as well as in private dealings between man and man, *'honesty is the best policy.'*" \*

Mr. Clay received the entire electoral vote of three States, Kentucky, Missouri, and Ohio. The following was his vote : Kentucky, 14 ; Ohio, 16 ; Missouri, 3 ; New York, 4 ; total, 37.

For Mr. Adams, New England cast her undivided vote, and New York gave him twenty-six out of thirty-six. He stood thus : Maine, 9 ; New Hampshire, 8 ; Vermont, 7 ; Massachusetts, 15 ; Connecticut, 8 ; Rhode Island, 4 ; New York, 26 ; Delaware, 1 ; Maryland, 3 ; Louisiana, 2 ; Illinois, 1 ; total, 84.

The following was the vote for Andrew Jackson : New-York, 1 ; New Jersey, 8 ; Pennsylvania, 28 ; Maryland, 7 ; North Carolina, 15 ; South Carolina, 11 ; Tennessee, 11 ; Louisiana, 3 ; Mississippi, 3 ; Alabama, 5 ; Indiana, 5 ; Ill-

\* Hammond's Political History of New York, ii., 179.

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Mr. Adams was the choice of seven States ; General Jackson, of eleven States ; Mr. Clay of three States ; Mr. Crawford of three States. Still no majority.

The population of the United States in 1820 was about nine and a half millions. The population of the three States which gave a majority for Mr Clay was 1,212,337. The population of the three States which preferred Mr. Crawford was 1,497,029. The population of the seven States which gave a majority for Mr. Adams was 3,032,766. The population of the eleven States which voted for General Jackson was 3,757,756.

It thus appears that General Jackson received, first, more electoral votes ; secondly, the vote of more States ; thirdly, the votes of more people than any other candidate. Add to these facts, the fact not less indisputable, that General Jackson was the second choice of Kentucky, Missouri, and Georgia ; and it must be admitted that he came nearer being elected by the people than any other candidate. He was, moreover, a gaining candidate. Every month added to his strength. A delay of a few weeks longer would probably have given him a majority. No man who surveyed the scene with an unprejudiced eye could doubt, that he, more than any one else, was the nation's choice. The opinions of a host of able politicians, beginning with that of Mr. Jefferson, could be cited in support of this position, but it needs no support. Simple addition and the census of 1820 are sufficient to establish it.

The result was not known in all its details when the time came for Senator Jackson to begin his journey to Washington in the fall of 1824. That he was pretty confident, however, of being the successful candidate, was indicated by Mrs. Jackson's accompanying him to the seat of government. They traveled in their own coach-and-four, I believe, on this occasion. The opposition papers, at least, said so, and descanted upon the fact as an evidence of aristocratic pretensions ; con-



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sidering it anti-democratic to employ four horses to draw a load that four horses sometimes could not tug a mile an hour, and were a month in getting to Washington.

The family party reached the city on the 7th of December. The next day General Jackson, from his seat in the Senate chamber, wrote a hasty note to Major Lewis: "I reached this city yesterday morning at 11 o'clock, all in good health, after a continued travel of twenty-eight days without resting one day. I enclose you the President's Message. You will see from the papers the electoral vote. If Louisiana has not voted for Mr. Clay, he is not in the House. When I have obtained the actual vote and become a little acquainted with the views of the political knowing-ones here, I will give you the speculations on the presidential question. I am anxious to hear from you—how Jesse has come out, etc. Write me. Give me the intelligence how our little sons are."

December 23d. Mrs. Jackson wrote to her friend, Mrs. Kingsley, at Nashville, an interesting and characteristic letter—the last of hers that I possess. This was Mrs. Jackson's first visit to the east:

"The present moment," she says, "is the first I can call my own since my arrival in this great city. Our journey, indeed, was fatiguing. We were twenty-seven days on the road, but no accident happened to us. My dear husband is in better health than when we came. We are boarding in the same house with the nation's guest, Lafayette. I am delighted with him. All the attentions, all the parties he goes to, never appear to have any effect on him. In fact, he is an extraordinary man. He has a happy talent of knowing those he has once seen. For instance, when we first came to this house, the General said he would go and pay the Marquis the first visit. Both having the same desire, and at the same time, they met on the entry of the stairs. It was truly interesting. The emotion of revolutionary feeling was aroused in them both. At Charleston, General Jackson saw him on the field of battle; the one a boy of twelve, the Marquis, twenty-three. He wears a wig, and is a little inclined to corpulency. He is very healthy, eats hearty, goes to every party, and that is every night.

"To tell you of this city, I would not do justice to the subject. The extravagance is in dressing and running to parties; but I must say they regard the Sabbath, and attend preaching, for there are churches of every

denomination and able ministers of the gospel. We have been here two Sabbaths. The General and myself were both days at church. Mr. Baker is the pastor of the church we go to. He is a fine man, a plain, good preacher. We were waited on by two of Mr. Balche's elders, inviting us to take a pew in his church in Georgetown, but previous to that I had an invitation to the other. General Cole, Mary, Emily, and Andrew, went to the Episcopal church.

"Oh, my dear friend, how shall I get through this bustle. There are not less than from fifty to one hundred persons calling in a day. My dear husband was unwell nearly the whole of our journey, but, thanks to our Heavenly Father, his health is improving. Still his appetite is delicate, and company and business are oppressive; but I look unto the Lord, from whence comes all my comforts. I have the precious promise, and I know that my Redeemer liveth.

"Don't be afraid of my giving way to those vain things. The apostle says, I can do all things in Christ, who strengtheneth me. The play-actors sent me a letter, requesting my countenance to them. No. A ticket to balls and parties. No, not one. Two dinings; several times to drink tea. Indeed, Mr. Jackson encourages me in my course. He recommends it to me to be steadfast. I am going to-day to hear Mr. Summerfield. He preaches in the Methodist church; a very highly spoken of minister. Glory to God for the privilege. Not a day or night, but there is the church opened for prayer."

On the day on which this letter was written, General Jackson had the pleasure of seeing the Senate concur with the bill which provided so munificently for paying to Lafayette the debt which the nation owed him. General Jackson supported the bill in all its stages, both by his votes and his influence. Seven Senators at one time opposed it. Before the question of ordering the bill to be read a third time but "one dissenting voice was audible," and on its final passage the vote was unanimous.

Before General Jackson had been many days in Washington, he received a confidential message from De Witt Clinton, which, besides being in itself important, is another proof that an expectation of Jackson's election to the presidency pervaded the country. "In the latter part of December," says Dr. Hammond, "I went to Washington, as the agent of the State, to settle its account with the general govern-

ment. Before I left Albany, I had, by special appointment, an interview with Governor Clinton, at which he stated to me that he had not the least doubt but that Jackson would be elected, and he instructed me to say to him that he wished him to form his cabinet without any personal reference to him (Mr. C.); that he could not accept of any appointment which would render it necessary for him to leave the State of New York; and that the only solicitude he felt was, that General Jackson should so form his cabinet as would secure prosperity and success to his administration.”\*

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## CHAPTER VI.

### HENRY CLAY ELECTS A PRESIDENT.

THE people having failed to elect a President, it devolved upon the House of Representatives, voting by States, each State having one vote, to elect one from the three candidates who had received the highest number of electoral votes. A majority of States being necessary to an election, some one candidate had to secure the vote of thirteen States. The great question was to be decided on the 9th of February, 1825.

Henry Clay, though excluded from the coming competition by the smallness of his electoral vote, became, as soon as that fact was known, the most important personage in Washington; the man upon whom all eyes were fixed, upon whom all hopes depended. The influence which he wielded in the House of Representatives, derived from his long connection with it, from his winning cast of character, from his strenuous will, from his eloquence, placed it in his power to give the election to whichever of the candidates he prefer-

\* Hammond's Political History of New York, ii., 189.

red. He was Warwick the king-maker. He was Banquo who should get kings, but be none. From being the great defeated, he was amused to find himself the universally sought.

“In the same hour,” he wrote, January 8th, 1825, to his friend and neighbor, Mr. Francis P. Blair, “I am sometimes touched gently on the shoulder by a friend, for example, of General Jackson, who will thus address me, ‘My dear sir, all my dependence is upon you; don’t disappoint us; you know our partiality was for you next to the hero; and how much we want a Western President.’ Immediately after a friend of Mr. Crawford will accost me, ‘The hopes of the Republican party are concentrated on you; for God’s sake preserve it. If you had been returned, instead of Mr Crawford, every man of us would have supported you to the last hour. We consider him and you as the only genuine Republican candidates.’ Next a friend of Mr. Adams comes with tears in his eyes, ‘Sir, Mr. Adams has always had the greatest respect for you, and admiration of your talents. There is no station to which you are not equal. Most undoubtedly you are the second choice of New England, and I pray you to consider seriously whether the public good and your own future interests do not point most distinctly to the choice which you ought to make.’ How can one withstand all this disinterested homage and kindness?”

Mr. Clay was not on cordial terms with either of the two highest candidates. His relations with General Jackson have been described by himself in a passage which we have already given. He was far from being a lover or an admirer of Mr. Adams. He had opposed, with all his eloquence and all his influence, many of the most important measures of Mr. Monroe’s administration; of which administration Mr. Adams had been the animating soul and the exculpatory pen. That very Spanish Treaty which gained Florida and yielded Texas, upon which Mr. Adams particularly plumed himself, had been denounced by Mr. Clay in the House of Representatives. There had been, moreover, a personal difference between the



Secretary and the Speaker, growing out of the negotiations at Ghent in 1814. And, in no circumstances conceivable, could there have been cordiality between the warm, popular, generously ambitious Clay, and the patient, plodding, austere, ambitious Adams.

Nor, in deciding the question before him, was Mr. Clay to make or mar his own fortunes. He was destined to create enemies and to encounter obloquy, however he decided it. We may, also, hazard the assertion that to whomsoever he should give the presidency, he would himself be invited to make his own selection of the offices in the gift of the President. No one, I think, can survey the whole scene of contention; as it appeared in the spring of 1825, without assenting to that conclusion. So far as his own interests were concerned, there was but one consideration calculated to bias his determination. If he gave the presidency to Jackson, it would injure his own prospects for the *next succession*, as the republican party would hesitate to select a candidate from the west to succeed a western president. Turn about is fair play. In 1828 or 1832, the slighted North—New England, New York, Pennsylvania—would urge a powerful claim to the succession—powerful but not irresistible.

No man can say that General Jackson would have appointed Mr. Clay to high office, if Mr. Clay had given him the appointing power; but it is extremely probable that he would. Mr. Clay received at least *one* most significant hint to that effect, from a gentleman who stood high in General Jackson's regard. The following statement was written by Mr. Clay himself, for the use of his biographer, Rev. C. Colton, and still exists in Mr. Clay's hand-writing: "Some time in January, 1825, and not long before the election of President of the United States by the House of Representatives, the Hon. James Buchanan, then a member of the House, and afterward many years a Senator of the United States from Pennsylvania, who had been a zealous and influential supporter of General Jackson in the preceding canvass, and was supposed to enjoy his unbounded confidence,

called at the lodgings of Mr. Clay in the city of Washington. Mr. Clay was at that time in the room of his only messmate in the house, his intimate and confidential friend, the Hon. R. P. Letcher, since Governor of Kentucky, then also a member of the House. Shortly after Mr. Buchanan's entry into the room, he introduced the subject of the approaching presidential election, and spoke of the certainty of the election of his favorite, adding that 'he would form the most splendid cabinet that the country had ever had.' Mr. Letcher asked 'How could he have one more distinguished than that of Mr. Jefferson, in which were both Madison and Gallatin? Where would he be able to find equally eminent men?' Mr. Buchanan replied that he 'would not go out of this room for a secretary of state,' looking at Mr. Clay. This gentleman [Mr. Clay] playfully remarked that 'he thought there was no timber there fit for a cabinet officer, unless it were Mr. Buchanan himself.' Mr. Clay, while he was so hotly assailed with the charge of bargain, intrigue, and corruption, during the administration of Mr. Adams, notified Mr. Buchanan of his intention to publish the above occurrence; but, by the earnest entreaties of that gentleman, he was induced to forbear doing so."

Another scene occurred at Washington during the winter that favors our conjecture. The Hon. J. Sloane, of Ohio, member of the House at that time, relates it. Mr. Sloane chanced to be in company, one evening in December, with General Sam Houston, of Tennessee, a warm partisan and friend of General Jackson. The conversation turned, of course, to the great topic. "General Houston commenced by suggesting that he supposed the Ohio delegation were all going to vote for General Jackson. To this I answered that I could not undertake to speak for them, for, so far as I knew no meeting or consultation had taken place among them. The manner of General Houston was anxious, and evinced much solicitude; and at this point of the conversation he exclaimed, 'What a splendid administration it would make, with Old Hickory as President and Mr. Clay as Secretary of State.' Having often before expressed to General

Houston my opinion of the several candidates, I did not, at that time, think proper to repeat it, contenting myself with an implied acquiescence in the correctness of his declaration. The conversation was continued for a considerable time, and for the most part had relation to Western interests as connected with the presidency, and was concluded by General Houston observing, 'Well, I hope you from Ohio will aid us in electing General Jackson, and then your man (meaning Mr. Clay) can have anything he pleases.'""\*

Mr. Crawford, we must mention here, was considered out of the arena. His health was, as yet, very far from being reëstablished. He was a tottering, imbecile old man—old prematurely. His friends, with Mr. Van Buren at their head, were passive, and had resolved, in caucus assembled, to remain so.† Their hopes of success were founded on the apparent probability that neither General Jackson nor Mr. Adams could command a majority of States, in which case the choice might fall upon Crawford.

Poor Crawford himself clung to this hope to the very last. He was induced by it to figure in a truly pitiable scene. "It had now been a long time," says his biographer, "since he had mingled with the public. He had not been present at any of the numerous festive and social meetings for which this season is famous. To drawing-rooms and soirees he was an utter stranger. Only a select and intimate few were in the habit of visiting him, even at his home. A few days previous to the time of election, however, and to the surprise of nearly all Washington, his friends conveyed him to the Capitol, and kept him there in company for several hours. The old man looked much better than was generally expected, and deported himself with accustomed amenity and dignity. Many who saw him only from a distance were most agreeably disappointed. Those with whom he shook hands and spoke, however, were observed to leave him with grave faces, and with all the signs and tokens of a melancholy interview.

\* Private Correspondence of Henry Clay, p. 489.

† Hammond's Political History of New York, vol. ii. p. 540, Note C.

Among these last was Clay himself; and it was afterward remarked by one of Crawford's friends, who was present, that his manner on that occasion told plainly enough that their hopes of his coöperation and support were at an end. 'Defects were but too evident,' as Cobb had written to his friends, and these sounded the funeral knell to his chances for the presidency."\*

The choice being thus narrowed to two candidates, what considerations ought to have influenced Mr. Clay's decision? A federalist might have doubted, but a republican ought not to have done so. The candidate that had come nearest to an election by the people was obviously the one for whom a truly democratic member of Congress would have given his vote. All questions respecting the comparative fitness of the candidates were impertinent, one would think. Mr. Clay, however, did not think so. Though he persuaded himself that Mr. Adams was the man whom the nation most desired, yet it is very evident from his letters that this was not the controlling consideration with him. Before leaving home in November, before the result of the popular election was known, he declared to confidential friends that in no circumstances whatever would he vote for General Jackson. He told Col. Thomas H. Benton so about the middle of December, three weeks before he wrote the letter to Mr. Blair, which is quoted above. "I left Washington," says Col. Benton, "on the 15th of December, on a visit to my father-in-law, Colonel James McDowell, of Virginia, where Mrs. Benton then was; and it was before I left Washington that I learned from Mr. Clay himself that his intention was to support Mr. Adams. I told this at that time to Colonel McDowell, and any friends that chanced to be present, and gave it to the public in a letter which was copied into many newspapers, and is preserved in Niles' *Register*. I told it as my belief to Mr. Jefferson on Christmas evening of the same year, when returning to Washington and making a call on that illustrious man at his seat, Monticello; and believing

\* Cobb's *Leisure Labors*, p. 218.

then that Mr. Adams would be elected, and, from the necessity of the case, would have to make up a mixed cabinet, I expressed that belief to Mr. Jefferson, using the term, familiar in English history, of 'broad bottomed,' and asked him how it would do? He answered: 'Not at all—would never succeed—would ruin all engaged in it.' Mr. Clay told his intentions to others of his friends from an early period."\*

The reasons that induced Mr. Clay thus to disregard the known wishes of the west appear plainly enough in his familiar correspondence. To Mr. Blair he again wrote late in January: "Mr. Adams, you know well, I should never have selected, if at liberty to draw from the whole mass of our citizens for a President. But there is no danger in his elevation now, or in time to come. Not so of his competitor, of whom I can not believe that killing two thousand five hundred Englishmen at New Orleans qualifies for the various difficult and complicated duties of the chief magistracy." To Mr. Francis Brooke, of Maryland: "As a friend of liberty, and to the permanence of our institutions, I can not consent, in this early stage of their existence, by contributing to the election of a military chieftain, to give the strongest guaranty that the republic will march in the fatal road which has conducted every other republic to ruin."

The adhesion of Mr. Clay to the Adams party, which he took no great pains to conceal, rendered its success nearly, but not absolutely certain. The old federalists, who could never quite forgive Mr. Adams for deserting them, still hesitated. Long excluded from office, they were anxious to know whether Mr. Adams, if elected, would continue to proscribe them. It was the influence of Daniel Webster, more than that of any other man, that finally removed the hesitation of the few members of the federal party that still lingered on the public stage. A curious, cautious letter of Mr. Webster on this subject exists, which throws light on the interior state of things at the time. It was addressed to a member of the house who had applied to Mr. Webster for advice. Mr.

\* Benton's Thirty Years, i, 48.

Webster replied that, though not intimate with Mr. Adams, he had great confidence in his patriotism and ability, and believed that he would pursue a liberal and conciliatory course toward the federal party. He should vote for him, and felt willing to advise his friends to do so.

To this letter Mr. Webster appended the following note :  
 "I read this, precisely as it now stands here, to Mr. Adams, on the evening of February 4. He said, when I had got through, that the letter expressed his general sentiments, and such as he was willing to have understood as his sentiments. There was one particular, however, on which he wished to make a remark. The letter seemed to require him, or expect him, to place one federalist in the administration. Here I interrupted him, and told him he had misinterpreted the writer's meaning. That the letter did not speak of those appointments called cabinet appointments particularly, but of appointments generally. With that understanding he said the letter contained his opinions, and he should feel it his duty, by some such appointment, to mark his desire of disregarding party distinctions. He thought either of them, if elected, must necessarily act liberally in this respect. In consequence of this conversation, I interlined in this letter the words 'in proper time and manner.' I made no other alteration in it."

Col. Benton, though the political disciple of Mr. Clay, as well as his admiring friend and relative, proved restive on this occasion. Nay, more than restive ; flatly rebellious. He refused, point-blank, to aid his chief in bringing in Mr. Adams to the presidency, averring that General Jackson was the preference and darling of the west, and that he (Thomas Benton) was not the man to assist in frustrating the wish of the section which had trusted and honored him. At that time Missouri had but a single representative in the house, Mr. John Scott, who was thus invested with the importance of carrying the vote of an entire State in his pocket. Mr. Scott being equivalent to New York's thirty-six members, or Pennsylvania's twenty-eight, there was a terrible struggle on

the part of Mr. Clay's friends and Col. Benton to enlighten Mr. Scott's understanding.

Long did he waver between these two powerful influences. The following correspondence shows the result of the contest :

MR. SCOTT TO COL. T. H. BENTON.

“ WASHINGTON CITY, Feb. 5, 1825.

“ HON. T. H. BENTON—Dear Sir: Notwithstanding the conversation we had on Thursday evening and on Friday, from which you might justly conclude that I would not vote for Mr. Adams, I am now inclined to think differently, and unless some other change in my mind takes place, I shall vote for him ; I take the earliest opportunity to apprise you of this fact, that you may not commit yourself with friends on the subject.

“ JOHN SCOTT.”

COL. T. H. BENTON TO MR. SCOTT.

“ SENATE CHAMBER, Feb. 8th, 1825.

“ Sir: I received on the morning of the 6th instant your note of the 5th, in which you make known to me your intention to give the vote of Missouri to Mr. Adams.

“ Sinister rumors, and some misgivings of my own, had been preparing my mind for an extraordinary development; but it was not until I had three times talked with you, face to face, that I could believe in the reality of an intention so inconsistent with your previous conversations, so repugnant to your printed pledges, so amazing to your constituents, so fatal to yourself.

“ The vote which you intend thus to give is not your own—it belongs to the people of the State of Missouri. They are against Mr. Adams. I, in their name, do solemnly protest against your intention, and deny your moral power thus to bestow your vote.

“ You have been pleased to make a reference, in one of your conversations, to my personal wishes in this election. I now reiterate that I disdain and repel the appeal; and again remit you to the exalted tribunal of honor and duty.

“ For nine years we have been closely connected in our political course; at length, the connection is dissolved, and dissolved under circumstances which denounce our everlasting separation.

“ For some expressions which you felt as unkind, in our conversation on Sunday, I ask your pardon and oblivion. I have a right to give you my opinion on a point of public duty, but none to inflict a wound on your

feelings, and, in this unexpected breaking of many ties, there is enough of unavoidable pain, without the gratuitous infliction of unkind words.

"To-morrow is the day for your self-immolation. If you have an enemy, he may go and feed his eyes upon the scene; your former friend will share the afflicting spectacle.

"With sincere wishes for your personal welfare, I remain, &c.,

"THOMAS H. BENTON."

Col. Benton, I may add, after ascertaining that Mr. Clay was not one of the highest three candidates, had canvassed vigorously for Mr. Crawford. Finding Mr. Crawford's election impossible, he transferred his influence to the Jackson party, and remained its stalwart, loud, and potent champion from that time to the end of his mortal career.

It was during this exciting season, that General Jackson was painfully reminded of that terrible day when Charles Dickinson fell before his unrelenting aim, twenty years before. He was closeted late one night with a member of Congress, in deep converse upon the coming event. The member's object, it is said (I know not with what truth), was to induce General Jackson to unite his political fortunes with those of Mr. Clay—adopting Mr. Clay as his premier and successor. Long he pleaded (it is said) with the old man, and pleaded in vain. At 12 o'clock he took his leave. The hall lamp of the hotel having been extinguished, the General went stumbling up stairs to his apartment in the dark. Upon reaching the top, he supposed that he had yet to ascend one stair, and, made an awkward step forward, and nearly fell. The viscera which had been displaced by Dickinson's ball and had falsely healed, were again severed from the breast-bone, and the internal wound was thus reopened. The General staggered to his room, and lay for more than a week quite disabled. He had several attacks of bleeding at the lungs, and remained subject to such attacks during the rest of his life. Many times, he was brought by them to the verge of the grave, and the affection was probably aggravated by his mode of treating it. When threatened with an attack, he would lay bare his arm, bandage it, take his penknife from



his pocket, call his servant to hold the bowl, and bleed himself freely. Often, indeed, during his presidency, he performed this operation in the night without any assistance.

Up to the time of the election, General Jackson and Mr. Clay continued to be on terms of civility with one another. "I reached Washington several days before him," wrote Mr. Clay in the address previously quoted. "Shortly after his arrival, he called to see me, but I was out. I returned the visit, considering it in both instances one of mere ceremony. I met with him but rarely during that session, and always when I did see him, in company. I sought no opportunities to meet him, for having my mind unalterably fixed in its resolution not to vote for him, I wished to inspire him with no hopes from me. The presidential election never was a topic to which the most distant allusion was made by me, in any conversation with him, but once, and that happened at a dinner given by the Russian Minister, the late Baron of Tuyll, on the 24th December, 1824. I recollect the day, because it was the birth day of the late Emperor Alexander. About thirty gentlemen composed that party, and among them, Mr. Adams, Mr. Calhoun, General Jackson, and, I think, Mr. Macon. Just before we passed from the drawing into the dining room, a group of some eight or ten gentlemen were standing together, of whom General Jackson and I were a part, and Internal Improvements (I do not recollect how) became the subject of conversation. I observed to him in the course of it, that if he should be elected President, I hoped the cause would prosper under his administration. He made some general remarks which I will not undertake to state, lest I should do him injustice."

The demeanor of General Jackson during these exciting weeks won him many admirers. On the very morning of the election, when Washington was breathless with expectation, he conversed on the only topic with a composure that was extremely becoming. Mr. Hezekiah Niles, of the *Register* reported an interview which he had with the General on that morning: "Though I had frequently seen and conversed

with him during the session of Congress, and always with much freedom on his part and real respect on mine, and notwithstanding we had spent many hours together, he never before had referred to the presidential question. He seemed resolved to avoid it, and it was not proper in me to press it upon him. But now he spoke of the elections made by the people, and of that about to be made by the House of Representatives, with a great deal of frankness and feeling. With the former he expressed himself gratified. The poll that had been made by him was honorable, and he was thankful for the confidence the people reposed. He could never forget it. But there was no assumption of merit in himself that he deserved it ; it was the people's own business, and they had done as they pleased. He then expressed himself after the following manner : He had no doubt but that a great portion of the citizens would be satisfied with the choice about to be made, and he seemed to think it most probable that it would devolve upon Mr. Adams. He further observed that many, in his opinion, were unpleasantly situated, seeing that they were compelled to act either against Mr. Adams or himself. But this was a matter of small importance compared with an adherence to the provisions of the Constitution, and the prompt and harmonious election of a President, which now belonged to the representatives of the States. It was well, he said, that persons should differ in opinion, that truth may be the more easily ascertained ; but, he added, with that earnestness and force which is peculiar to him, *we should always recollect that, in maintaining our own opinions, we naturally grant the right to others of supporting theirs, or lose every pretension to republicanism.* And he further remarked it was a matter of small moment to the people who was their President, provided he administered the government rightfully."

At noon, on the 9th of February, the members of the Senate, with their president at their head, preceded by the sergeant-at-arms, entered the Representatives' hall. The president of the Senate was invited to a seat at the right

hand of the Speaker, and the Senators took their seats together in front of the Speaker's chair. Every member of the House was in his place except one, who was known to be sick at his lodgings. The galleries were packed with spectators, and the areas were thronged with judges, ambassadors, governors of States, and other privileged persons. The first business in order was the formal opening of the electoral packets, and the formal announcement that Mr. Calhoun had been elected Vice-President ; that no one had received a majority of electoral votes for the presidency, and that the House of Representatives had then to elect a President from the three highest candidates—Jackson, Adams, and Crawford.

The Senators retired. The roll of the House was called by States, and the members of each delegation took their seats together. The vote of each State was deposited in a box by itself, and placed upon tables. The tellers previously appointed, Daniel Webster and John Randolph, proceeded to open the boxes and count the ballots.

A long contest had been expected. The friends of Crawford were present in great force, fondly hoping that the House, after wearying itself by repeated ballotings, would turn to their candidate and end the affair by giving him the election.

The result, when announced by the tellers, surprised almost every one ; surprised many of the best informed politicians who heard it. Upon this first ballot, Mr. Adams received the vote of thirteen States, which was a majority. Maryland and Illinois, which had given popular majorities for Jackson, voted for Adams. Kentucky, Ohio, and Missouri, which had given popular majorities for Clay, voted for Adams. Crawford received the vote of four States, Delaware, North Carolina, Georgia, and Virginia. General Jackson, for whom eleven States had given an electoral majority, received the vote of but seven States in the House.

When the election of Mr. Adams was announced by Mr. Webster, there was a momentary burst of applause from the galleries, followed by some hissing. The House paused in its

proceedings, and ordered the galleries to be cleared, and they were cleared accordingly. The House adjourned a few minutes afterward, and the friends of the different candidates hastened away to congratulate or console.

Three of the warmest of the partisans of Crawford repaired to his residence to announce to him the sudden failure of all his hopes. Mr. Cobb was one of the three, but he dared not witness the first shock of his chief's disappointment. The other two, Messrs. Macon and Lowry, went into the room of the ambitious invalid. "Crawford was calmly reclining in his easy chair, while one of his family read to him from a newspaper. Macon saluted him, and made known the result with delicacy, though with ill-concealed feeling. The invalid statesman gave a look of profound surprise, and remained silent and pensive for many minutes, evidently schooling his mind to a becoming tolerance of the event which had for ever thwarted his political elevation. He then entered freely into conversation, and commented on the circumstances of the election as though he had never been known as a candidate. He even jested and rallied his friend Cobb, whose excess of feeling had forbidden *him* to see Crawford until the shock had passed—for *he* knew that the enfeebled veteran would be shocked. The conversation, on the part of these friends, was not untinged with bitterness and spite, vented against the prominent actors in both the adverse political factions, but more especially against those of the successful party, as being more immediately responsible for the crushing overthrow of their own beloved candidate. Crawford himself refrained from giving utterance to the least exceptionable sentiment, and behaved, during the remainder of his stay in Washington, with a mildness and an urbanity befitting one of his exalted station, who had just staked and lost his political fortune."\*

A few days after, Mr. Cobb wrote thus despondingly: "The presidential election is over, and you will have heard the result. The clouds were black, and portentous of storms

\* Cobb's Leisure Labors, p. 227.

of no ordinary character. They broke in one horrid burst, and straight dispelled. Every thing here is silent. The victors have no cause to rejoice. There was not a single window lighted on the occasion. A few free negroes shouted, 'Huzza for Mr. Adams!' But they were not joined even by the cringing populace of this place. The disappointed submit in sullen silence. The friends of Jackson grumbled at first like the rumbling of distant thunder, but the old man himself submitted without a change of countenance. Mr. Crawford's friends changed not their looks. They command universal respect. Adams has caused it to be announced that they shall have no cause to be dissatisfied. Two days ago the Treasury Department was tendered to Crawford, and refused. On the same day General Jackson paid him a friendly and civil visit, but nothing passed but an interchange of civilities. . . . Crawford will return home, and we must do the best we can with him. Should he and our friends wish that he should again go into the Senate, the way shall be open for him. I am sick and tired of every thing here, and wish for nothing so much as private life. My ambition is dead."

There was a great crowd, however, besides "free negroes," to salute the Rising Sun. There was a presidential levee that evening, to which all Washington rushed; and there was a pleasant gentleman among the throng who has been so obliging as to tell the world, in his most agreeable manner, what he saw in the rooms of the White House on that occasion. We quote from the "Recollections" of Mr. S. G. Goodrich :

"I shall pass over other individuals present, only noting an incident which respects the two persons in the assembly who, most of all others, engrossed the thoughts of the visitors—Mr. Adams the elect, General Jackson the defeated. It chanced in the course of the evening that these two persons, involved in the throng, approached each other from opposite directions, yet without knowing it. Suddenly, as they were almost together, the persons around, seeing what was to hap-

pen, by a sort of instinct stepped aside and left them face to face. Mr. Adams was by himself; General Jackson had a large, handsome lady on his arm. They looked at each other for a moment, and then General Jackson moved forward, and reaching out his long arm, said: 'How do you do, Mr. Adams? I give you my left hand, for the right, as you see, is devoted to the fair: I hope you are very well, sir.' All this was gallantly and heartily said and done. Mr. Adams took the General's hand, and said, with chilling coldness: 'Very well, sir; I hope General Jackson is well!' It was curious to see the western planter, the Indian fighter, the stern soldier, who had written his country's glory in the blood of the enemy at New Orleans, genial and gracious in the midst of a court, while the old courtier and diplomat was stiff, rigid, cold as a statue! It was all the more remarkable from the fact that, four hours before, the former had been defeated, and the latter was the victor, in a struggle for one of the highest objects of human ambition. The personal character of these two individuals was in fact well expressed in that chance meeting: the gallantry, the frankness, and the heartiness of the one, which captivated all; the coldness, the distance, the self-concentration of the other, which repelled all."

The repulsive manner of Mr. Adams in official stations was not exhibited, it appears, in circles more private. Judge Brackenridge writes of him: "The first time I had the pleasure of seeing Mr. Adams, was in the summer of 1817, when he arrived at New York with his family, after a long and tedious passage across the Atlantic. Lodging in the same house, I soon formed an acquaintance with him. I found him in his domestic intercourse remarkably free and affable, and in his family particularly amiable. He was then in the prime of life; in his manner open and communicative, and even playful and facetious in a small circle of friends. I afterward saw him often in public, when he appeared cold and distant, and even awkward, which I attributed partly to natural reserve in the midst of promiscuous company, and

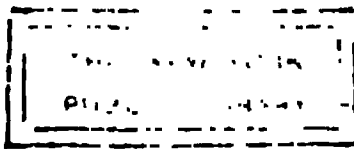
bashful, hesitating, half consent—hesitating, because some of her relatives do not quite fancy him. But just as every thing is about to be settled to the satisfaction of everybody—just as papa is about to say yes, and brother Tom is coming round, a sly Kentuckian, by secret arts, lures the damsel from her real inclination, and he reads the marriage in next morning's paper !

He puts a good face on the matter, of course. No one shall *see* him tear his hair. No one shall *hear* his imprecations. No one shall have it to say that he *caught* him crying. But he is flesh and blood notwithstanding. He had loved the maiden more ardently than he supposed, and the long chase has enhanced her charms a thousandfold !

General Jackson, then, we must plainly avow, was most indignant at his defeat, if not keenly disappointed by it. The confidential letters written by him between the day of the election and that of the inauguration of Mr. Adams, show this plainly enough.

To his friend, Major Lewis, five days after the election, he dashed off the following note : “ I am informed this day, by Colonel R. M. Johnson, of the Senate, that Mr. Clay has been offered the office of Secretary of State, and that he will accept it. So, you see, the *Judas* of the West has closed the contract and will receive the thirty pieces of silver. His end will be the same. Was there ever witnessed such a barefaced corruption in any country before ? The Senate (if this nomination is sent to it) will do its duty. No imputation will be left at its door. We will soon be with you. Farewell. Mr. Clay told Colonel J. the above.”

On the 20th of February, eleven days after the election, he wrote to Col. George Wilson, editor at Nashville : “ The public journals will have given you the result of the presidential election, and how it was brought about by the union of Clay and his friends with Mr. Adams. The predictions in part have been fulfilled. Mr. Clay, it is said, has been offered the office of Secretary of State, and it is also said he has agreed to accept it. This, to my mind, is the most open,





partly to the diplomatic habit of dismissing all expression from his countenance, derived from his position abroad. Knowing his natural warmth of disposition, I was surprised when I afterward saw him, as the chief magistrate of the nation, receive a splendidly dressed personage, glittering in gold and feathers, with a formal coldness that froze like the approach to an iceberg.”\*

Five days after the election, Mr. Clay wrote a hasty note to his friend, Francis Brooke: “Southard remains in the Navy department. I am offered that of the State, but have not yet decided. The others not yet determined on. Crawford retires. What shall I do?”

We all know what he did. He deliberated a week, consulted with friends, and accepted the office. Warnings he had, but he disregarded them. He evidently knew not what he did, and anticipated nothing of what followed. “From the first,” he wrote to Mr. Crittenden, “I determined to throw myself into the hands of my friends, and if they advised me to decline the office, not to accept it; but if they thought it was my duty, and for the public interest, to go into it, to do so. I have an unaffected repugnance to any executive employment, and my rejection of the offer, if it were in conformity to their deliberate judgment, would have been more compatible with my feelings than its acceptance. But as their advice to me is to accept, I have resolved accordingly, and I have just communicated my final determination to Mr. Adams. An opposition is talked of here; but I regard that as the ebullition of the moment, the natural offspring of chagrin and disappointment.”

\* Eulogy upon John Quincy Adams. By Hon. H. M. Brackenridge. Pittsburgh, 1848.

## CHAPTER VII.

## JACKSON'S PRIVATE OPINION OF THESE TRANSACTIONS.

WELL, reader, and was General Jackson so loftily acquiescent in his defeat as he seemed ?

Running for the presidency is not unlike the pursuit of a coy, bewitching damsel, whom one has long been accustomed to see at a distance, and to admire without a thought of possessing her. But the swain gets more intimately acquainted with her at length. She smiles upon him when he approaches. She seems not to disdain, nor to dislike the association of his name with hers, nor to prefer the society of other men to his. He has been wont to think of himself as an awkward, ungainly fellow, fit to "command an army in a rough way," but not to win so fair a prize as that fair hand. Yet the intoxicating thought will steal, at last, into his mind, that the enchanting creature may be his. From that moment he is in love.

Rivals appear upon the carpet. They were there before, but he regarded them not ; tall, handsome rascals, more used to the carpet than himself. But, after all, what are they ? Talkers merely. While he was on the frontiers, fighting his country's battles, and gaining victories over her enemies, and ending a disastrous war in a blaze of glory, that shines still in every American countenance, *they* were speaking pretty speeches and writing paper arguments. And some of them (by the Eternal !) presume to sneer at his pretensions, *because* he served his country in her hour of need, *because* he abandoned home and family, and went forth into the howling wilderness to fight and starve ! Military chieftain, forsooth ! They took good care to keep their skins whole ! No one can accuse *them* of risking any thing for their country—the speech-makers !

The lover thinks he has fairly won the girl. She gives a

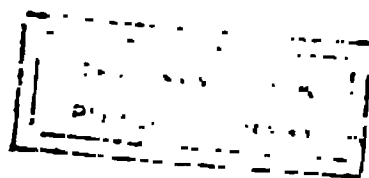
bashful, hesitating, half consent—hesitating, because some of her relatives do not quite fancy him. But just as every thing is about to be settled to the satisfaction of everybody—just as papa is about to say yes, and brother Tom is coming round, a sly Kentuckian, by secret arts, lures the damsel from her real inclination, and he reads the marriage in next morning's paper !

He puts a good face on the matter, of course. No one shall *see* him tear his hair. No one shall *hear* his imprecations. No one shall have it to say that he *caught* him crying. But he is flesh and blood notwithstanding. He had loved the maiden more ardently than he supposed, and the long chase has enhanced her charms a thousandfold !

General Jackson, then, we must plainly avow, was most indignant at his defeat, if not keenly disappointed by it. The confidential letters written by him between the day of the election and that of the inauguration of Mr. Adams, show this plainly enough.

To his friend, Major Lewis, five days after the election, he dashed off the following note : “ I am informed this day, by Colonel R. M. Johnson, of the Senate, that Mr. Clay has been offered the office of Secretary of State, and that he will accept it. So, you see, the *Judas* of the West has closed the contract and will receive the thirty pieces of silver. His end will be the same. Was there ever witnessed such a barefaced corruption in any country before ? The Senate (if this nomination is sent to it) will do its duty. No imputation will be left at its door. We will soon be with you. Farewell. Mr. Clay told Colonel J. the above.”

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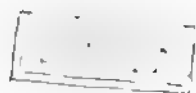
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daring corruption that has ever shown itself under our government, and if not checked by the people will lead to open direct bribery in less than twenty years. For what is this barter of office for votes but bribery.

“Mr. Clay is prostrate here in the minds of all honest and honorable men. What will be his fate in Kentucky I can not say ; but Mr. Bibb, who is here, says this act will prostrate him in Kentucky.

“Mrs. J. has been unwell for about three weeks. She is recovering, and I hope will be able to travel so soon as the Senate can rise. I can not leave it until it rises, for the virtue of the Senate, I have great hopes, will prevent the consummation of those corrupt bargains for office.”

On the same day he wrote again to Major Lewis, and at greater length, on the same subject. The larger part of this letter was evidently written with a view to its being shown. It repeats the sentiments of the hasty note just given, but expresses them with more moderation.

GENERAL JACKSON TO MAJOR WM. B. LEWIS.

“CITY OF WASHINGTON, February 20th, 1825.

“DEAR MAJOR: You have seen from the public journals that the rumors of union, and barter for office, between Mr. Clay's friends and Mr. Adams have been verified by the result of the presidential election. The information now is, that the contract, so far as Mr. Clay is concerned, is fulfilled, by the offer by Mr. Adams to Mr. Clay of the appointment of Secretary of State, which, it is said, Mr. Clay has agreed to accept. I have, as you know, always thought Mr. Adams to be an honest, virtuous man, and had he spurned from him those men who have abandoned those principles they have always advocated, that the people have a right to govern, and that their will should be always obeyed by their constituents, I should still have viewed him as an honest man ; and that the rumors of bargain and sale was unknown to him. But when we see the predictions verified in the result of the presidential election—when we behold two men, political enemies, and as different in political sentiments as any men can be, so suddenly unite, there must be some unseen cause to produce this political phenomenon. This cause is developed by applying the rumors before the election, to the result of that election, and to the tender of, and acceptance of the office of Secretary of State by Mr. Clay.



"These are facts that will confirm every unbiased mind, that there must have been a secret understanding between Mr. Adams and Mr. Clay, of and concerning these schemes of corruption, that has occasioned Mr. Clay to abandon the will and wishes of the people of the West, and to form the coalition so extraordinary as the one he has done.

"You know my inmost feelings upon the subject of the presidential election. I can reiterate with truth, that if it had not been for the means used, I would be happy at the result, as it gives me the liberty, when I choose, to retire once more to my peaceful dwelling. But when I reflect that the result has been brought about by the offer to Mr. Clay of the Secretary of State's office, and his influence with other members, I look forward and shudder for the liberty of my country. If at this early period of the experiment of our republic, men are found base and corrupt enough to barter the rights of the people for proffered office, what may we not expect from the spread of this corruption hereafter? May we not expect to see not only proffer of office, but direct bribery, by an ambitious demagogue, who is guided by no principle but that of self-aggrandizement.

"From Mr. Clay's late conduct, my opinion of him, long ago expressed, is but realized. From his conduct on the Seminole question, I then pronounced him a political gambler, and from his late conduct in the abandonment of all those republican principles which he always professed, and by which he had obtained the support of the people, and forming such an alliance, so unexpectedly, with a man he had denounced before the nation, and all this for the office of the Secretary of State, reveals the fact of his gambling. Would it be too much to infer that his ambition might induce him to reach the executive chair by open and direct bribery, as well as the barter of office? These are my reflections, and I can not, from the scenes lately and now acting here, refrain from shuddering for the liberty of my country.

"There is no other correction of these abuses but the suffrages of the people. If they apply calmly and judiciously this corrective, they may preserve and perpetuate the liberty of our happy country. If they do not, in less than twenty-five years we will become the slaves, not of a 'military chieftain,' but of such ambitious demagogues as Henry Clay. It is, then, necessary that the people should look to it now, as corruption is in the bud, before it extends itself further among the representatives in Congress.

"Mrs. J. has been unwell for some weeks, but is now mending, and I hope will be able to travel as soon as the Senate rises, which I can not leave until it does, as I have a hope there is a redeeming spirit in the virtue of the Senate, which may prevent the consummation of this corruption of barter for office.

"We will be with you, I hope, shortly. In the meantime, present us

affectionately to your family, and receive for yourself our best wishes. Adieu.

“ANDREW JACKSON.”

(Private.) “P. S. On the result of the election, a number of my friends requested that I should not answer that I would or would not suffer my name again to be run as President ; nor to say whether I would resign or not my seat in the Senate. It is said that Mr. Adams has agreed with Clay to give him all the support he can to keep up his name in the West. I have *now* no doubt but that I have had opposed to me all the influence of the Cabinet except Calhoun. Would it not be well that the papers of Nashville and the whole State should speak out with moderate but firm disapprobation of this corruption, to give a proper tone to the people, and to draw their attention to the subject? When I see you I have much to say. There is more corruption here than I anticipated, and as you know, I thought there was enough of it.”

Lastly, we have the once celebrated “Swartwout letter,” written February 22, whereby hangs a tale. Mr. Samuel Swartwout had been in Washington since the election ; had been one of those who invited General Jackson to a public dinner a day or two after the election ; had been in daily familiar intercourse with the General. Keeping these facts in view, does the following epistle read like the unprompted effusion of private friendship, or like the contrived utterance of the politician for effect upon the public ?

GENERAL JACKSON TO SAMUEL SWARTWOUT.

“WASHINGTON CITY, February 22, 1825.

“MY DEAR SIR: Yesterday I received your communication adverting to the reasons and defense presented by Mr. Clay to Judge Francis Brooke why duty and reflection imposed upon him the necessity of standing in opposition to me, because of my being, as he styles me, a ‘military chieftain.’ I had seen the letter before, and when it first appeared I did entertain the opinion that some notice of it might perhaps be necessary, for the reason that the expression seemed to convey with it the appearance of personality more than anything else ; and could the opinion be at all entertained that it could meet the object, which was doubtless intended, to prejudice me in the estimation of my countrymen, I might yet consider some notice of it necessary. Such a belief, however, I can not entertain, without insulting the generous testimonial with which I have been honored by ninety-nine electors of the people.

“I am well aware that this term, ‘military chieftain,’ has, for some

time past, been a cant phrase with Mr. Clay and certain of his friends, but the vote with which I have been honored by the people is enough to satisfy me that the prejudice which was thereby sought to be produced has availed but little. This is sufficient for me. I entertain a deep and heartfelt gratitude to my country for the confidence which she has manifested toward me, leaving to prejudiced minds whatever they can make of the epithet 'military chieftain.'

"It is for ingenuity greater than mine to conceive what idea was intended to be conveyed by the term. It is very true that, early in life, even in the days of my boyhood, I contributed my mite to shake off the yoke of tyranny, and to build up the fabric of free government. And when lately our country was involved in war, bearing then the commission of Major-General of militia forces in Tennessee, I made an appeal to the patriotic citizens of the West, when three thousand went with me into the field to support her eagles. If this constitutes me a 'military chieftain,' I am one. Aided by the patriotism of the western people, and an indulgent Providence, it was my good fortune to protect our frontier border from the savages, and successfully to defend an important and vulnerable point of our Union. Our lives were risked, privations endured, and sacrifices made—and, if Mr. Clay pleases, martial law declared—not with any view of personal aggrandizement, but for the preservation of all and everything that was dear and valuable—the honor, the safety and glory of our country! Does this constitute the character of a 'military chieftain?' And are all our brave men in war, who go forth to defend their rights, and the rights of the country, to be termed 'military chieftains,' and denounced therefor? If so, the tendency of such a doctrine may be to arrest the ardor of useful and brave men in future times of need and peril. With me, it will make no difference; for my country at war, I would aid, assist, and defend her, let the consequences to myself be what they might.

"I have, as you very well know, been charged, by some of the designing politicians of this country with taking bold and high-handed measures; but as they were not designed for any benefit to myself I should not, under similar circumstances, refrain from a course equally bold. That man who, in times of difficulty and danger, shall halt at any course necessary to retain the rights, privileges, and independence of his country, is unsuited to authority. And if these opinions and sentiments shall entitle me to the name and character of a 'military chieftain,' I am content so to be considered; satisfied too, that Mr. Clay, if he pleases, shall give that as a reason to the citizens of the West, why, in his opinion, I merited neither his own nor their confidence.

"Mr. Clay has never yet risked himself for his country. He has never sacrificed his repose, nor made an effort to repel an invading foe. Of course, "his conscience" assured him it was altogether wrong in any other

man to lead his countrymen to battle and victory. He who fights, and fights successfully, must, according to his standard, be held up as a 'military chieftain.' Even Washington, could he again appear among us, might be so considered, because he dared to be a virtuous and successful soldier, a correct man, and an honest statesman. It is only when overtaken by disaster and defeat, that any man is to be considered a safe politician and a correct statesman.

"Defeat might, to be sure, have brought with it one benefit. It might have enabled me to escape the notice and animadversions of Mr. Clay; but considering that, by an opposite result, my country has been somewhat benefited, I rather prefer it, even with the opprobrium and censure which he seems disposed to extend toward me. To him, thank God, I am in no wise responsible. There is a purer tribunal to which I would in preference refer myself—to the judgment of an enlightened, patriotic, and uncorrupted people. To that tribunal I would rather appeal, whence is derived whatever of reputation either he or I may possess. By a reference there, it will be ascertained that I did not solicit the office of President; it was the frank and flattering call of the freemen of this country, not mine, which placed my name before the nation. When they failed in their colleges to make a choice, no one beheld me seeking, through art or management, to entice any representative in Congress from a conscientious responsibility to his own, or the wishes of his constituents. No midnight taper burnt by me; no secret conclaves were held; nor cabals entered into to persuade any one to a violation of pledges given or of instructions received. By me no plans were concerted to impair the pure principles of our republican institutions, nor to prostrate that fundamental maxim, which maintains the supremacy of the people's will. On the contrary, having never in any manner, either before the people or Congress, interfered in the slightest degree with the question, my conscience stands void of offense, and will go quietly with me, regardless of the insinuations of those who, through management, may seek an influence not sanctioned by integrity and merit.

"Demagogues, I am persuaded, have done more injury to the cause of freedom and the rights of man than ever did a military chieftain, and in our country, at least in times of peace, should be much more feared. I have seen something of this in my march through life; and have seen some men, too, making the boldest professions, who were more influenced by selfish views and considerations, than ever they were by the workings of an honest conscience.

"I became a soldier for the good of my country. Difficulties met me at every step, but I thank God it was my good fortune to surmount them.

"The war over, and peace restored, I retired to my farm to private life, where, but for the call I received to the Senate of the Union, I should have contentedly remained. I have never sought office or power, nor have

time past, been a cant phrase with Mr. Clay and certain of his friends, but the vote with which I have been honored by the people is enough to satisfy me that the prejudice which was thereby sought to be produced has availed but little. This is sufficient for me. I entertain a deep and heartfelt gratitude to my country for the confidence which she has manifested toward me, leaving to prejudiced minds whatever they can make of the epithet 'military chieftain.'

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"I have, as you very well know, been charged, by some of the designing politicians of this country with taking bold and high-handed measures; but as they were not designed for any benefit to myself I should not, under similar circumstances, refrain from a course equally bold. That man who, in times of difficulty and danger, shall halt at any course necessary to retain the rights, privileges, and independence of his country, is unsuited to authority. And if these opinions and sentiments shall entitle me to the name and character of a 'military chieftain,' I am content so to be considered; satisfied too, that Mr. Clay, if he pleases, shall give that as a reason to the citizens of the West, why, in his opinion, I merited neither his own nor their confidence.

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man to lead his countrymen to battle and victory. He who fights, and fights successfully, must, according to his standard, be held up as a 'military chieftain.' Even Washington, could he again appear among us, might be so considered, because he dared to be a virtuous and successful soldier, a correct man, and an honest statesman. It is only when overtaken by disaster and defeat, that any man is to be considered a safe politician and a correct statesman.

"Defeat might, to be sure, have brought with it one benefit. It might have enabled me to escape the notice and animadversions of Mr. Clay; but considering that, by an opposite result, my country has been somewhat benefited, I rather prefer it, even with the opprobrium and censure which he seems disposed to extend toward me. To him, thank God, I am in no wise responsible. There is a purer tribunal to which I would in preference refer myself—to the judgment of an enlightened, patriotic, and uncorrupted people. To that tribunal I would rather appeal, whence is derived whatever of reputation either he or I may possess. By a reference there, it will be ascertained that I did not solicit the office of President; it was the frank and flattering call of the freemen of this country, not mine, which placed my name before the nation. When they failed in their colleges to make a choice, no one beheld me seeking, through art or management, to entice any representative in Congress from a conscientious responsibility to his own, or the wishes of his constituents. No midnight taper burnt by me; no secret conclaves were held; nor cabals entered into to persuade any one to a violation of pledges given or of instructions received. By me no plans were concerted to impair the pure principles of our republican institutions, nor to prostrate that fundamental maxim, which maintains the supremacy of the people's will. On the contrary, having never in any manner, either before the people or Congress, interfered in the slightest degree with the question, ~~my~~ conscience stands void of offense, and will go quietly with me, regardless of the insinuations of those who, through management, may seek an influence not sanctioned by integrity and merit.

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"The war over, and peace restored, I retired to my farm to private life, where, but for the call I received to the Senate of the Union, I should have contentedly remained. I have never sought office or power, nor have

I ever been willing to hold any post longer than I could be useful to my country, not myself; and I trust I never shall. If these things make me one, I am a 'military chieftain.' I am, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

ANDREW JACKSON."

If the letter to Mr. Swartwout was not written for the public, the public was soon afforded an opportunity of inspecting it. Mr. Swartwout, early in March, a very few days after General Jackson wrote the letter, sent a copy of it for publication to the New York *National Advocate*, accompanied by a note of introduction. "It was not intended for the public eye," said Mr. Swartwout, "yet it contains so just an exposition of the enlightened views and noble conduct of the distinguished author, that I can not forbear soliciting its publication in your valuable paper."

Mr. Clay made some cutting comments upon the Swartwout letter in an address to his constituents, soon after. "It is true," said he, "that it has been my misfortune never to have repelled an invading foe, nor to have led my countrymen to victory. If I had, I should have left it to others to proclaim and appreciate the deed." Mr. Clay ridiculed the pretense that the letter was intended only for the eye of the person to whom it was addressed. "Of all the citizens of the United States," he remarked, "that gentleman is one of the last to whom it was necessary to address any vindication of General Jackson. He had given abundant evidence of his entire devotion to the cause of the General. He was here after the election, and was one of a committee who invited the general to a public dinner, proposed to be given to him in this place. My letter to Judge Brooke was published in the papers of this city on the 12th of February. The General's note, declining the invitation of Messrs. Swartwout and others, was published on the 14th, in the *National Journal*. The probability, therefore, is, that he did not leave this city until after he had a full opportunity to receive, in a personal interview with the General, any verbal observations upon it which he might have thought proper to make. The letter



to Mr. Swartwout bears date the 23d of February. If received by him in New York, it must have reached him, in the ordinary course of mail, on the 25th or 26th. Whether intended or not as a 'private communication,' and not for the 'public eye,' as alleged by him, there is much probability in believing that its publication in New York, on the 4th of March, was then made with the view to its arrival in this city in time to affect my nomination to the Senate. In point of fact, it reached here the day before the Senate acted on that nomination."\*

The end of the session arrived. Mr. Clay, upon resigning the Speaker's chair, delivered the usual address to the house, in the course of which he stated that during his speakership of nearly fourteen years, not one of his decisions had been reversed. The inauguration occurred on the well-known day, and the multitude rushed, as usual, to the White House, to congratulate the new President. General Jackson was prominent among the congratulating throng, on this occasion also. "General Jackson, we were pleased to observe," wrote an editor present, "was among the earliest of those who took the hand of the President, and their looks and deportment toward each other were a rebuke to that bitterness of party spirit which can see no merit in a rival, and feel no joy in the honor of a competitor."

In the course of the evening, General Jackson met in one of the apartments of the presidential mansion his old Philadelphia friend, Colonel Duane, of the *Aurora*, whom he had known and admired when first he represented Tennessee in Congress. "Colonel," said the General with emotion, "you know how I must feel."†

In the Senate chamber that morning General Jackson, being the oldest Senator present, had administered to Mr. Calhoun the oath of office ; after which the Vice-President took his seat as President of the Senate.

\* Mallory's Life and Speeches of Henry Clay, vol. i., p. 504.

† The grandson of Colonel Duane favored me with this little anecdote.



The nomination of Mr. Clay to the office of Secretary of State was sent to the Senate on the seventh of March. It was not confirmed unanimously. A majority of nearly two to one, however, voted for the confirmation, and the affair was settled without debate. Among those who voted for confirming were Colonel Benton, General Harrison, and Mr. Van Buren. Among those who voted against it were Messrs. Berrien and Cobb of Georgia, Mr. Branch of North Carolina, General Jackson, Major Eaton, Mr. Hayne of South Carolina, and John Randolph. The vote stood : for the confirmation, 27 ; against it, 15 ; absentees, 7.\*

A few days after, General Jackson and his family began their long journey homeward. It was like a triumphal progress. At Baltimore a ball was given in his honor ; a review of the troops was held ; Mrs. Jackson received a crowd of ladies in her parlor ; the General a thronging multitude of gentlemen in his ; and the party were escorted several miles beyond the city by a cavalcade. Every town through which they passed seemed to turn out *en masse* to welcome the illustrious defeated.

Nashville, as usual, gave him a prodigious reception. After the usual interchange of addresses, the General was conducted to the dining-room of the old Nashville inn, which was decorated for the occasion, and a large company sat down to the customary banquet. The General's old friend, the Hon. George W. Campbell, presided. Among the toasts given on this occasion were these two :

By GENERAL JACKSON—"The late achievements of the

\* "I requested," said Mr. Clay, in his Lexington speech, of 1827, "a Senator of the United States, when my nomination should be taken up, to ask of the Senate the appointment of a committee of inquiry, unless it should appear to him altogether unnecessary. One of our Senators was compelled, by the urgency of his private business, to leave Washington before my nomination was disposed of; and as I had but little confidence in the fidelity and professed friendship of the other, I was constrained to present my application to a Senator from another State. I was afterward informed that when it was acted upon, General Jackson, and every other Senator present, was silent as to the imputation now made; no one presuming to question my honor or integrity."

South Americans on the fields of Ayachuco—may they be in the history of liberty another YORKTOWN.”

By ANDREW HYNES—“The friends of internal improvement—they are the benefactors of their country.”

“And so home.”

The reader is left to make his own reflections upon these events. When the story is told, the duty of the biographer is done, and that of the reader begins. There may be those who would have had this contrast between General Jackson’s private utterances and General Jackson’s public behavior suppressed or softened. There may be those who think that more is due to the memory of a favorite hero than to truth ; or, in other words, that more is due to Andrew Jackson than to the people of the United States. If any such there be—and I have been told there are such—their applause is dishonor, their censure glory. For those who wish to know the truth, and only for those, these pages have been toilfully prepared.

It was stated at the beginning that Andrew Jackson was not a model to copy ; no man is ; but a specimen to study, as every man is. As his circumstances become more difficult, his duties more complex and important, he makes larger demands both upon the insight and the charity of the student.

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## CHAPTER VIII.

### PRESIDENT ADAMS REVIVES AN OLD CONTROVERSY.

SINCE Jefferson’s day, there have been in the world two parties of political theorists.

One of these, for lack of a better name, we may take the liberty of styling the Paternal-Government party, because they think that the relation between government and people

should be similar to that which exists between parent and children. Government, they say, should do as much for the people as it can, leaving the people free to attend to their private business. Government should undertake great national works, such as bridges, canals, and roads; should found great national institutions, such as colleges, banks, libraries, museums, observatories, laboratories; should monopolize certain branches of industry, such as carrying letters and other very small parcels, teaching children in common schools, and their parents in state-supported churches; and, in all ways possible, should think for the people, contrive for the people, take the lead of the people, and work out by governmental machinery the people's welfare.\*

Government, say these philosophers, among whom are some of the noblest of the race, should be both powerful and splendid—the source of honor, the nation's voice, ornament, and strength. It should be powerful, that it may effectually do its great duty; splendid, because man is a creature of imagination, who loves to lose a sense of personal insignificance in contemplating greatness in his governors and representatives, and can not stand unabashed before a being like himself who has been decorated with a word. Duke, baron, lord, marquis, why not? How economical to reward illustrious services to the State by permitting a man to prefix four letters, quite meaningless, to his name. If a few letters of the alphabet are at once so valued and so costless, why

\* "A good administration is composed of a regular system of taxes, of a prompt and impartial mode of collecting them; of a system of finances which assures public credit; of an honorable magistracy, which will cause the laws to be respected; finally, of a system of administrative machinery which will cause the life to circulate from the center to the extremities, and from the extremities to the center. But that which especially distinguishes a good administration is, that it calls forth all kinds of merit, and all rare faculties to illuminate its career and put in operation all improvements; that it represses with vigor all abuses; that it meliorates the lot of the poorer classes; that it rouses to activity all branches of industry; that it holds a just balance between rich and poor, between those who labor and those who employ, between the agents of power and those who are controlled by them."—*Napoleonic Ideas, by Louis Napoleon.*

not bestow them? If it is so sweet to human nature to adorn itself with a name, what good reason is there for refusing to gratify it so far?

The American lovers of the paternal government theory do not carry it to these lengths. They stop short of the State Church, and the titles. But in the essence of the matter, there is no difference that I can see between the opinions of the emperor of Russia, Louis Napoleon, Thomas Carlyle, the old federalists, and the *New York Tribune*.

Mr. Carlyle speaks of a "teaching service," and looks for the regeneration of England to a "Reformed Downing Street." Mr. Greeley a born conservative, is strenuous for the State support of common schools, and asks Congress to help build a Pacific railroad.

The other theory of government is the Jeffersonian—the world-is-governed-too-much theory.

The party who hold to the Jeffersonian creed are of opinion that the office of government is solely to maintain justice between man and man, and between the nation and other nations. It should have nothing to do with carrying letters, supporting schools, digging canals, constructing railroads, or establishing scientific institutions. Its business is simply to suppress villains, foreign and domestic. The people are to be left absolutely free to work out their welfare in their own way; free, especially in all departments of industry, from the paralyzing touch of governmental patronage.

This party think that government can not do any thing in the way of internal improvements so well, so cheaply, so exactly at the right time, as the people themselves; and that if the people have not within themselves the energy, the intelligence, the virtue requisite for the development of their resources, and the improvement of their minds, and the instruction of their children, no machinery of government, no power from above or from without, can do it for them. Let government confine itself to its one duty of compelling the faithful performance of contracts, the protection of every

and leave the rest to the people, is the essence of this theory.

For example. Paternal government offers munificent rewards to inventors, authors, and artists. A government conducted on the Jeffersonian principle simply enacts a patent and a copyright law, securing to ingenuity and talent the fruit of their productions. (Result—sixty inventions a week.) A paternal government would attempt to decolonize American literature, by forbidding the re-publication of foreign works, and offering premiums to those of home production. A government of the opposite description will, it is hoped, accomplish the end desired by international copyright treaties. Paternal government establishes and supports schools; Jeffersonian government ordains (or should) that no ignorant shall vote, and sees to it (or should) that no parent, guardian, or master *defrauds* a child, ward, or apprentice of the means of acquiring knowledge. Paternal government founds a national bank; free government enacts a New York banking law. Paternal government builds railroads, or, if it does not build them, regulates them, inspects them, lays down numberless rules designed to protect passengers. Free government simply holds a railroad company responsible for damages, makes it pay for every limb broken, for every hour lost; in a word, compels it to *do* what it was paid to do, and what it contracted to do. Paternal government pours the people's money in a ceaseless stream into the Erie canal. Jeffersonian government would sell the canal to the highest bidder, and thus turn a nuisance into a blessing—a source of corruption into a means of civilization. Paternal government will, perhaps, undertake a Pacific railroad; who does not know with what result? One day after it should be known that government will keep its palsy and corruptive hands off that enterprise—worthy only of a great PEOPLE—measures would be begun for doing the work by private enterprise: and private enterprise would do it precisely at the right moment, on precisely the best route, in precisely the best mode the circumstances permit.

This theory of government, incompletely set forth in the writings of Mr. Jefferson, has been recently elaborated with singular lucidness and power by an English author, Mr. Herbert Spencer, whose work on "SOCIAL STATICS" Mr. Jefferson ought to have lived long enough to have read, such keen delight would he have had in seeing his cherished opinions stated with the clearness of light, and demonstrated as Euclid demonstrates propositions in geometry. This work, not yet re-published in the United States, will be a school book among us some day. And how Mr. Jefferson would have reveled in that wonderful work, conceived wholly in the anti-paternal spirit. "The History of Civilization in England," by HENRY THOMAS BUCKLE, the greatest man that ever wrote history.

The Jeffersonian system, besides its general claims, has a peculiar adaptedness to the federal government of the United States, because that government can undertake no work of internal improvement, can found no national institution, which will not seem to do more for one section of the Union than for others.

The extreme Jeffersonians were accustomed to support their opinions chiefly on the ground of an adherence to the letter and spirit of the Constitution, instead of broadly asserting that their theory was founded in justice and wisdom, and was, therefore, of universal application. Hence they were called "strict constructionists" and "States' rights men." Thus De Witt Clinton, though reckoned among the very strictest of the strict constructionists, was the great supporter of the canal policy of the State of New York. It was only the solitary thinkers of the liberal party who dreamt of carrying out their theory to its legitimate results. So far, however, as the federal government was concerned, the decided republicans clung to the Jeffersonian doctrine during the twenty-four years' administration of the government by Mr. Jefferson and his disciples.

But disciples are not always faithful to the doctrines of

the master. Nor are masters always true to the systems that bear their name.

In his first message, Mr. Jefferson said, that "Agriculture, manufactures, commerce, and navigation, the four pillars of our prosperity, are most thriving, when left most free to individual enterprise." In his fifth message, he hesitatingly proposed an amendment to the Constitution which would admit of the endowment of a national university. "Education," said he, "is here placed among the articles of public care ; not that it would be proposed to take its ordinary branches out of the hands of private enterprise, which manages so much better all the concerns to which it is equal ; but a public institution can alone supply those sciences which, though rarely called for, are yet necessary to complete the circle, all the parts of which contribute to the improvement of the country, and some of them to its preservation." Again, in his last message, when puzzled with surplus revenue, he asked : " Shall it lie unproductive in the public vaults ? shall the revenue be reduced ? or shall it not rather be appropriated to the improvements of roads, canals, rivers, education, and other great foundations of prosperity and union, under the powers which Congress may already possess, or such amendment of the Constitution as may be approved by the States ? While uncertain of the course of things, the time may be advantageously employed in obtaining the powers necessary for a system of improvement, should that be thought best."

Mr. Jefferson, however, was always consistent in this—that internal improvements, however desirable, were not authorized by the Constitution of the Union.

Mr. Madison renewed the recommendation of a national university (first proposed by President Washington), and was brought, at last, to assent to the establishment of a national bank. Mr. Monroe, though supposed to be a stricter constructionist than his predecessor, also recommended the founding of a national university, and proposed measures for amending the Constitution, so as to legalize a grand system of

internal improvement by the general government. He also recommended the voting of money by Congress to repair the Cumberland road. "Surely," said he, in his message in 1822, "if Congress had a right to appropriate money to make the road, they have a right to appropriate it to preserve the road from ruin." Unquestionably. The gradual change in the tone of Mr. Monroe's messages on this dividing question, was attributed at the time to the influence of Mr. John Quincy Adams, Secretary of State.

And perhaps justly. Mr. Adams was a federalist by birth, by disposition, by early association, by confirmed habit. He abandoned the federalists for reasons which had nothing to do with the fundamental issues between the two parties, and his inaugural address as President revealed the fact to all the world. "The magnificence and splendor of their public works," said he, "are among the imperishable glories of the ancient republics. The roads and aqueducts of Rome have been the admiration of all after ages, and have survived thousands of years after all her conquests have been swallowed up in despotism, or become the spoil of barbarians. Some diversity of opinion has prevailed with regard to the powers of Congress for legislation upon objects of this nature. The most respectful deference is due to doubts, originating in pure patriotism, and sustained by venerated authority. But nearly twenty years have passed since the construction of the first national road was commenced. The authority for its construction was then unquestioned. To how many thousands of our countrymen has it proved a benefit? To what single individual has it ever proved an injury?"

In his first annual message, Mr. Adams went unexampled lengths in this direction. The phrases "our country" and "the government" seem to have been synonymous in his mind. In glowing paragraphs, he recommended a national university, exploring expeditions, an astronomical observatory, and the construction of roads and canals. "The spirit of improvement," he concluded, "is abroad upon the earth. It stimulates the heart, and sharpens the faculties, not of our fel-



low-citizens alone, but of the nations of Europe, and of their rulers. . . . While foreign nations, less blessed with that freedom which is power than ourselves, are advancing with gigantic strides in the career of public improvement, were we to slumber in indolence, or fold up our arms and proclaim to the world that we are palsied by the will of our constituents, would it not be to cast away the bounties of Providence, and doom ourselves to perpetual inferiority? In the course of the year now drawing to its close, we have beheld under the auspices, and at the expense of one State of this Union, a new University unfolding its portals to the sons of science, and holding up the torch of human improvement to the eyes that seek the light. We have seen, under the persevering and enlightened enterprise of another State, the waters of our western lakes mingled with those of the ocean. If undertakings like these have been accomplished in the compass of a few years, by the authority of single members of our Confederation, can we, the representative authorities of the whole Union, fall behind our fellow-servants in the exercise of the trust committed to us for the benefit of our common Sovereign, by the accomplishment of works important to the whole, and to which neither the authority nor the resources of any one State can be adequate?"

This is pretty decided. But Mr. Rush, the Secretary of the Treasury, in one of his annual reports, as far surpassed Mr. Adams as Mr. Adams surpassed his predecessor. Mr. Rush said it was the duty of government "to augment the number and variety of occupations for its inhabitants; to hold out to every degree of labor, and to every modification of skill, its appropriate object and inducement; to organize the whole labor of a country; to entice into the widest ranges its mechanical and intellectual capacities, instead of suffering them to slumber; to call forth, wherever hidden, latent ingenuity, giving to effort activity, and to emulation ardor; to create employment for the greatest amount of numbers by adapting it to the diversified faculties, propensi-

ties, and situations of men, so that every particle of ability, every shade of genius, may come into requisition."

In the palmiest days of the federal party, was there ever uttered such arrant, such innocently arrogant nonsense?

Thus the old controversy was re-opened. Thus there was a real and fair ground of opposition to the new administration. Federalism, supposed to be dead, was living, rampant, and sitting in the seat of power.\*

The long, bony finger, the piercing screech of John Randolph, of Virginia, were promptly raised in execration of these pernicious delusions. John Randolph despoiled of his natural hopefulness, cheerfulness, kindliness, by disease alone!

\* The following is an extract from the third annual message of Mr. John Quincy Adams: "The expediency of providing for additional numbers of officers in the two corps of engineers will, in some degree, depend upon the number and extent of the objects of national importance upon which Congress may think it proper that surveys should be made, conformably to the act of the 30th of April, 1824. Of the surveys which, before the last session of Congress, had been made under the authority of the act, reports were made: 1. Of the board of internal improvement on the Chesapeake and Ohio canal; 2. On the continuance of the national road from Cumberland to the tide waters within the District of Columbia; 3. On the continuation of the national road from Canton to Zanesville; 4. On the location of the national road from Zanesville to Columbus; 5. On the continuation of the same road to the seat of government in Missouri; 6. On a post road from Baltimore to Philadelphia; 7. Of a survey of Kennebec River (in part); 8. On a national road from Washington to Buffalo; 9. On the survey of Saugatuck Harbor and River; 10. On a canal from Lake Pontchartrain to the Mississippi River; 11. On surveys at Edgerton, Newburyport, and Hyannis Harbor; 12. On survey of La Plaisance Bay, in the Territory of Michigan; and reports are now prepared, and will be submitted to Congress, on surveys of the peninsula of Florida, to ascertain the practicability of a canal to connect the waters of the Atlantic with the Gulf of Mexico, across that peninsula; and also of the country between the Bays of Mobile and of Pensacola, with the view of connecting them together by a canal; on surveys of a route for a canal to connect the waters of James and Great Kenhawa Rivers; on the survey of the Swash in Pamlico Sound, and that of Cape Fear, below the town of Wilmington, in North Carolina; on the survey of the Muscle Shoals, in the Tennessee River, and for a route for a contemplated communication between the Hiwassee and Coosa Rivers, in the State of Alabama. Other reports of surveys upon objects pointed out by the several acts of Congress of the last and preceding sessions, are in the progress of preparation, and most of them may be completed before the close of this session."

The least Buncombized, most guileless of public men ! One of the last *individuals* produced among us ! In these days, we are nearly all foolish alike, wise alike, weak alike, strong alike. In other days, there were varieties of human nature, which made men interesting to one another. No one can read Mr. Garland's well executed biography of John Randolph without feeling that if he was a wreck, he was the wreck of a MAN.

John Randolph had an old grudge against the name and race of Adams—even against John Adams, who was also an individual. “John II.,” Randolph humorously styled the new President. “It is no secret,” said Mr. Randolph, in one of his earliest fulminations against the revived doctrines, “that I was in New York when John Adams first took his seat as Vice-President. I recollect—for I was a schoolboy at the time—attending the lobby of Congress when I ought to have been at school. I remember the manner in which my brother was spurned by the coachman of the Vice-President for coming too near the arms emblazoned on the escutcheon of the vice-regal carriage. Perhaps I may have some of this old animosity rankling in my heart ; and, coming from a race” (Pocahontas) “who are known never to forsake a friend or forgive a foe, I am taught to forgive my enemies ; and I do, from the bottom of my heart, most sincerely, as I hope to be forgiven. But it is *my* enemies, not the enemies of my country.” And he proceeds to satirize the doctrines of the “speech and message,” and, especially, “the doctrine that goes to take the whole human family under the President's special protection.” In another of these fierce anti-federal harangues, Mr. Randolph spoke of the union of Mr. Adams and Mr. Clay as the “coalition of Blifil and Black George—the combination, unheard of till then, of the puritan and the black-leg ;” a remark which caused the famous duel between Randolph and Clay, in 1826.

Mr. Clay's showy scheme of uniting all the republics of North and South America in a kind of league, or Holy Alliance, called forth intense opposition. It came to naught, and we need not dwell upon it.

Then, Mr. Adams, in accordance with his half pledge to Mr. Webster, appointed a few federalists to office. The mission to England, offered first to De Witt Clinton, and declined by him, was given to Mr. Rufus King, the most conspicuous of the surviving members of the old party. This appointment, creditable as it was to the President and to the country, was little relished by the republican party, though Mr. King had for a short time acted with that party.

The administration of Mr. Adams was, in one respect, so superior to any which the country has since known, that it will long be looked back upon by intelligent citizens with mingled pride and sorrow. It was a decent administration. A large proportion of those who served it were gentlemen : *i. e.*, educated men of principle ; men who had had mothers that taught them to be kind, and fathers who compelled them to do right. The transcendent meanness, the unspeakable stupidity of removing honest men from subordinate offices on account of their political opinions, was unknown to the administration of John Quincy Adams. He removed but two place-holders, and both for cause. In the third month of his presidency he wrote these wise, these prophetic words : "The custom-house officers throughout the Union, in all probability, were opposed to my election. They are all now in my power ; and I have been urged very earnestly, and from various quarters, to sweep away my opponents and provide for my friends with their places. I can justify the refusal to adopt this policy only by the steadiness and consistency of my adhesion to my own. If I depart from this in any one instance, I shall be called upon by my friends to do the same in many. An invidious and inquisitorial scrutiny into the personal disposition of public officers will creep through the whole Union, and the most sordid and selfish passions will be kindled into activity, to distort the conduct and misrepresent the feelings of men, whose places may become the prize of slander upon them."\*

\* Quincy's Life of J. Q. Adams, p. 147.

John Binns, too, tells us : “ On the arrival in Philadelphia of President Adams, he did me the honor of an invitation. I waited on him at the Mansion House Hotel, and took an opportunity to introduce the subject of his appointments. I was promptly told that Mr. President Adams did not intend to make any removals. I bowed respectfully, assuring the President that I had no doubt the consequence would be that he would himself be removed so soon as the term for which he had been elected had expired. This intimation gave the President no concern, and assuredly did in nowise affect his previous determination.”\*

The honorable conduct of Mr. Adams in this particular, accorded with that of his predecessors. It may, perhaps, be said that no man had been dismissed from a subordinate post under the general government for partisan reasons merely. A place under government was generally regarded as a provision for life, and office-holders enjoyed the dignity, and exhibited the fidelity which permanent appointments alone have ever secured or can secure. In a word, the public business was conducted on principles upon which private business is conducted, and the public clerk had the same motives for good conduct as the private clerk has. The retention of his place, and his advancement to a better, were the natural and just reward of efficiency and fidelity.

Against the new administration, therefore, was soon arrayed a powerful party of “strict constructionists” in Congress, headed by John Randolph, a host of office-seekers, and the great mass of those who had supported General Jackson, and who were soon to believe that he had been kept out of the presidency by a corrupt bargain.

But was not General Jackson, the reader may ask, as decidedly committed to the internal improvement and protective tariff policy as Mr. Adams ? Almost. But the fact was not so generally known. And did he not, in his letters to Mr. Monroe, recommend the appointment of federalists to office ? He did. Well, then, how could the opposition to

\* Recollections of John Binns, p. 250.

Mr. Adams on these grounds be made available for the advancement of General Jackson? The question is more easily asked than answered. Read on.

As this chapter was about to be consigned to the printer, I received from Mr. Nicholas P. Trist a copy of a political letter written by General Jackson in 1801, which claims insertion here :

GENERAL JACKSON TO DR. WILLIAM DICKSON.

\* KNOXVILLE, Sept. 1, 1801.

"DEAR SIR: Through life I have held it a sacred duty I owed to my country and myself never to give my suffrage to a candidate for a seat in the Congress of the United States, unless I was convinced that his political sentiments were congenial with those he represented, and that he would speak and do the will of his constituents; and being now informed that you are a candidate for the honor of representing the citizens of the State of Tennessee, in the representative branch of the federal legislature, believing, as I do, that any citizen who does obtain the suffrage of the freemen of Tennessee, must be a character, the composition of which is virtue, talents, and the true whig principles of seventy-six; in short, sir, that he must be a republican, and in politics like Cæsar's wife, not only chaste, but unsuspected.

"The first two component parts of this character I know you to possess; the latter, as to myself, I have ever thought you did. But, sir, the public mind has been lately led to believe that your political sentiments are doubtful, and some have held you up as an aristocrat. These reasons have operated upon me to call upon you to answer the following interrogatories :

"First. Are you, and have you always been an admirer of the true whig principles of '76?

"Have you always been an admirer of State authority?

"Are you now, and have you always been an admirer of the constitution of the United States, friendly to its administration, agreeable to the true literal meaning of the instrument, and banishing the dangerous doctrine of implication?

"Have you always been, and are you now opposed to standing armies in time of peace?

"Are you now, and have you always been inimical to a standing naval armament?

"Are you now, and have you always been opposed to foreign political connections?

"Are you now, and have you always been opposed to the extension of the executive patronage?"

"Have you always been, and are you now an advocate for freedom of religion, and the freedom of the press?"

"Are you now, and have you always been friendly to economy in the public disbursements, and an enemy to the system of loans?"

"And, lastly, are you a real republican in principle, and will you be a republican in practice?"

"The above questions are put to you by a sincere friend in private life, and one who is very much disposed to extend to you his little political support. He expects, however, that these questions will be answered with your usual candor on other subjects. This letter is not confidential, nor will your answer be viewed as such. It is as well for the gratification of inquiring friends as myself.

"Accept, sir, of my respects, and believe me to be your obedient servant,

"ANDREW JACKSON.

"Doctor WILLIAM DICKSON."

This is Jeffersonian, as far as it goes, and it touches in a rude way most of the points then in controversy between the Adams men and the Jeffersonians.

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## CHAPTER IX.

### GENERAL JACKSON RENOMINATED.

ACCORDING to the time-honored usages of the Republican party, the presidency was disposed of for twenty-four years. Mr. Adams expected to hold his place for eight years. Mr. Clay expected to succeed him, as previous Secretaries of State had succeeded their chiefs. Mr. Clay would, of course, serve eight years, and appoint a Secretary of State to be his successor in 1841. And, doubtless, there were worthy young gentlemen, not a few, who had an eye fixed hopefully upon the year 1849.

But the dethronement of King Caucus had changed all that. The "secretary dynasty," as it was called, was possible only so long as the sphere of contention was confined to the narrow compass of the Capital. Neither Mr. Adams nor Mr. Clay seem to have been aware of the fact, but it was a fact, and the managers of the Jackson party knew it. The resolution to make General Jackson a candidate for 1829 dated from the moment when the result of the election in the House of Representatives was known. It was, at once, resolved to appeal to "another tribunal."

Tennessee, as we have seen, welcomed her defeated General home in the summer of 1825, as conquerors are welcomed. In October of the same year, the seventh month of the new administration, the legislature of Tennessee, with three dissentient voices, passed a resolution to the effect that "General Andrew Jackson, of this State, be recommended to the freemen of the United States, as a fellow-citizen, who, by his numerous and faithful public services, in the cabinet and in the field, his energy and decision, his political qualifications, and strict adherence to the principles of republicanism, merits to be elected to the office of chief magistrate of this Union, at the next presidential election."

A few days after, it was whispered in the legislature that General Jackson was on his way to the capital of the State. It was forthwith resolved that "as an evidence of the respect and attachment entertained by this legislature, in common with our fellow-citizens, towards General Andrew Jackson for his high personal qualifications, and numerous and important services rendered to his country, that the two branches of this general assembly will receive him on the day next after his arrival at the seat of government, at 12 o'clock, in the representative hall;" and that "one or both of the speakers, on behalf of the two houses, shall deliver, at such time, to General Jackson an address, expressive of the high personal satisfaction they feel in relation to the course he pursued, during the pendency of the late presidential election."

The General was received and addressed, accordingly, and



delivered a suitable reply. He handed to one of the speakers, on the same occasion, a written paper, which proved to be the resignation of his seat in the Senate of the United States. General Jackson was nothing if not belligerent. This document, like his farewell address to the army, was as much designed to wound enemies as to gratify friends. It was mainly a hit at Mr. Clay for accepting office under Mr. Adams ; but not so bold and direct a blow as that which the same hand dealt at " Jacob Brown " in 1821. General Jackson began by saying that, when his name was first proposed for the senatorship, he had been given to understand that a longer period of service than two years would not be expected of him. Two years had elapsed. He was still in some doubt whether or not he should resign his seat, when certain late proceedings of the legislature had resolved his doubts, and induced him to resign forthwith. He then proceeded to remark approvingly upon a proposed amendment to the constitution of the United States, limiting the service of the President to a single term of four or six years. He was in favor of such an amendment.

Having disposed of this subject, he came to the real object of his discourse.

" And, indeed," he continued, " I would go further, with a view to sustain more effectually in practice, the axiom which divides the three great classes of power into independent constitutional checks; I would impose a provision rendering any member of Congress ineligible to office under the general government during the term for which he was elected and for two years thereafter, except in cases of judicial office ; and these I would except for the reason that vacancies in this department are not frequent occurrences, and because no barrier should be interposed in selecting for the bench men of the first talents and integrity. Their trusts and duties being of the most responsible kind, the widest possible range should be permitted that judicious and safe selections might be made. The politician may err, yet his error may be presently retrieved, and no considerable injury result ; but with judges,

particularly in the last resort, error is fatal, because without a remedy.

“The effect of such a constitutional provision is obvious. By it Congress, in a considerable degree, would be free from that connection with the executive department which at present gives strong ground of apprehension and jealousy on the part of the people. Members, instead of being liable to be withdrawn from legislating on the great interests of the nation through prospects of the executive patronage, would be more liberally confided in by their constituents, while their vigilance would be less interrupted by party feelings and party excitements. Calculations from intrigue or management would fail ; nor would their deliberations or investigation of subjects consume so much time. The morals of the country would be improved, and virtue, uniting with the labors of the representatives, and with the official ministers of the law, would tend to perpetuate the honor and glory of the government. But if this change in the Constitution should not be obtained, and important appointments continue to devolve upon the representatives in Congress, it requires no depth of thought to be convinced that corruption will become the order of the day, and that under the garb of conscientious sacrifices to establish precedents for the public good, evils of serious importance to the freedom and prosperity of the republic may arise. It is through this channel that the people may expect to be attacked in their constitutional sovereignty, and where tyranny may well be apprehended to spring up in some favorable emergency. Against such inroads every guard ought to be interposed, and none better occurs than that of closing the suspected avenue with some necessary constitutional restriction. We know human nature to be prone to evil ; we are early taught to pray that we may not be led into temptation, and hence the opinion that by constitutional provisions all avenues to temptation on the part of our political servants should be closed.”

If General Jackson, then, is ever elected President, he will not appoint to office members of Congress ! I wonder

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if Messrs. Eaton, Ingham, Branch, Berrien, Livingston, Forsyth, Stephenson, Buchanan, and other gentlemen supposed to have an interest in the matter, *believed* this in 1825. If they did, some of them gave extraordinary proofs of disinterestedness.

General Jackson's resignation having been accepted by the legislature, Judge Hugh L. White, of East Tennessee, was elected to serve during the remaining four years of Jackson's term. Judge White, an old friend and fellow-soldier of General Jackson, had contributed all his influence, in the presidential campaign of 1824, to the election of the General. The Jackson party, therefore, in sending Judge White to the Senate, gained a Senator who was devoted to the elevation of their candidate. The new Senator, moreover, was from principle and clear conviction a "strict constructionist"—more than a Jeffersonian; a man peculiarly hostile to the revived federalism of the new administration. The magnificent dreams of Messrs. Adams, Clay, and Rush, awakened all his old repugnance to the party of the past. He had, therefore, a twofold motive for exertion in his new sphere: warm affection for General Jackson, and intense antipathy to the opinions of Mr. Adams. Judge White was, also, an honest man, nicely conscientious, strict and punctual in the discharge of every duty known to him, whether public or private. Not exempt from human foibles, not splendid in natural endowments, he was one of the most respectable and honorable of public men.

The renomination of General Jackson by the State of Tennessee, premature as it seemed, was not suffered to fall to the ground. In May, 1826, the nomination was indorsed by an immense public meeting in Philadelphia, and in November of the same year a powerful movement in his behalf was begun in Georgia. Long before the usual time of beginning the quadrennial agitation, he was placed before the people in most of the States as the candidate for the presidency in opposition to the reelection of Mr. Adams.

During the next three years, General Jackson, though he

passed most of the time at home, was the central figure in an extraordinary number of receptions and public dinners. To judge from the newspapers of the day, he could not stir abroad without finding a committee in his path, who took possession of him bodily, conveyed him to some public banqueting hall, and got him on his legs to speak. A large number of his replies to invitations and other letters found their way into the newspapers, most of which are but repetitions of those which the reader has already seen. The following, however, is a pleasant and honorable exception :

GENERAL JACKSON TO GENERAL PLANCHÉ, AND OTHER CITIZENS OF NEW ORLEANS.

" NASHVILLE, TEN., May 26, 1826.

"GENTLEMEN: I take the liberty to address you upon a subject in which I feel great interest, as it is one with which I know the welfare and happiness of our country to be intimately connected. It relates to the blessings of education, which, without doubt, constitutes the chief support of the liberties which our forefathers bequeathed to us.

"There is now in operation at Nashville a college, which, with a little more pecuniary encouragement, is likely to become one of the most flourishing institutions in the United States. It is situated in a part of the great valley of the West, where the feelings, habits, and manners of the people are purely republican. The climate is healthy, and the means of support are cheap and abundant. The institution will, therefore, extend its advantages to the poor, as well as the rich, and prepare for the service of their country the sons of the farmers and mechanics, as well as those who by fortune are exempt from the necessity of labor.

"The president is an accomplished gentleman of the first acquirements, and the subordinate professors are gentlemen highly esteemed for literary and scientific attainments. But to place upon a lasting foundation the property of this college, it is requested to obtain funds for two more professorships, which were created last year, and which the Board of Trustees have thought proper (in honor of the good Lafayette and the humble services I had rendered the country) to call by the names of Lafayette and Jackson.

"It is well known that the good Lafayette is destitute of the means to make a permanent endowment of this nature, as is the case also with myself, otherwise these professorships would have been filled ere this. Our resort is to appeal to the liberality of those who have the means to make donations, and the disposition to yield them, for the lasting benefit

of an institution so well calculated to prepare the American youth for the councils of our common country.

"Without doubt, the trustees had two motives in view in honoring Lafayette and myself (if I may be pardoned for speaking of myself in conjunction with that illustrious benefactor) with the names of those professorships—the one to compliment our names with the perpetuity which it is hoped the institution will experience, the other to coöperate upon the feelings of such as may derive an additional inducement from the circumstance, to contribute an endowment which, with the smiles of Providence, will, I trust, redound to the credit of its patrons and the general cause of knowledge.

"The object of this letter, then, gentlemen, is to ask you to present, or cause to be presented to the good citizens of New Orleans, the enclosed paper, or one of its purport, and to receive and remit such aid as each citizen may be disposed to give. It is not expected of any to give but a small sum. Small donations will enable the more persons to aid in the establishment of those professorships, and to testify their respect for the cause of literature and science.

"I am, very respectfully, your most obedient servant,

"ANDREW JACKSON.

"Messrs. General Planché, Col. Preston, Major A. Davezac, J. J. Mercier, Jun., Esq., Col. Maunsel White."

From the mass of General Jackson's political utterances at this period I select only one paragraph, written in July, 1826. He had been invited to accompany Mrs. Jackson to Harrodsburgh Springs, in Kentucky. He declined, partly on the ground of a slight improvement in his wife's health, but chiefly because the journey would be thought a political one. "When I reflect," he wrote, "upon the management and intrigue which are operating abroad, the magnitude of the principles which they are endeavoring to supplant, and the many means which they can draw to their assistance from the patronage of the government, I feel that it is not less due to myself and principle than to the American people, particularly so far as they have sanctioned my political creed, to steer clear of every conduct out of which the idea might arise that I was maneuvering for my own aggrandizement. If it be true that the administration have gone into power contrary to the voice of the nation, and are now expecting,

by means of this power thus acquired, to mold the public will into an acquiescence with their authority, then is the issue fairly made out, shall the government or the people rule. And it becomes the man whom the people shall indicate as their rightful representative in the solemn issue, so to have acquitted himself, that while he displaces these enemies of liberty, there will be nothing in his own example to operate against the strength and durability of the government."

It is painful to copy such sentences. But it is essential to the integrity of this work to do so. It is necessary to show that it was the habit of General Jackson's mind to attribute the conduct of his opponents to the lowest motives from which that conduct could be imagined to proceed.

The health of Mrs. Jackson continued to be precarious during the whole of this period. Her disease was an affection of the heart, which was liable to be aggravated by excitement. She never approved of the General's running for office ; and, if now she wished him to succeed, it was only because she knew he wished it. Unceasingly she strove to turn his thoughts to those subjects in which alone she found comfort, which alone she thought important. She warned him not to be dazzled nor deluded by his popularity ; of which her good sense as a woman, no less than her opinions as a Presbyterian, taught her the emptiness. One Sunday morning, a communion Sunday, in 1826 or 1827, as they were walking toward the little Hermitage church, she besought him to dally no longer with his sense of duty, but, then and there, that very hour, in their own little church, to renounce the world and all its pomps and vanities, and partake of the communion with her. He answered, "My dear, if I were to do that now, it would be said, all over the country, that I had done it for the sake of political effect. My enemies would all say so. I can not do it *now*, but I promise you that when once more I am clear of politics I will join the church."



This incident he related, with tears in his eyes, many years after to his beloved friend Blair, of the *Globe*, as they stood under the tall trees of the grove in which the church stands.

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## CHAPTER X.

### THE BARGAIN AND CORRUPTION CRY.

Too much, by a hundred thousand pages, having been already written upon this sorry business, I have been sorely tempted to pass it over without mention. The disgraceful story must be told, however. It belongs to our subject. It can not be suffered to pass into that oblivion which has ruthlessly swallowed so much that was better worth preservation.

“Give us a good cry to go down to the country with,” say the London clubs to a shaky ministry anticipating a dissolution of Parliament. The Jackson party had a most telling cry in the campaign of 1828, and we are now to learn how they got it.

General Jackson, as we know, left Washington after the election in the House of Representatives, convinced that there had been a corrupt understanding between Mr. Clay and Mr. Adams, to the effect that Clay should make Adams President, on condition that Adams should appoint Clay Secretary of State. General Jackson, as we have just observed, was always prone to think evil of those who opposed him, as well as to be too indulgent to those who supported him. On this occasion, as on many others, his propensity was stimulated by those who hoped to thrive by his assistance.

I. On the 28th of January, 1825, twelve days before the election in the House of Representatives, the following letter

was published anonymously in a Philadelphia newspaper, called the *Columbian Observer* :

“WASHINGTON, Jan. 25, 1825.

“DEAR SIR: I take up my pen to inform you of one of the most disgraceful transactions that ever covered with infamy the republican ranks. Would you believe that men, professing democracy, could be found base enough to lay the ax at the very root of the tree of liberty! Yet, strange as it is, it is not less true. To give you a full history of this transaction would far exceed the limits of a letter. I shall, therefore, at once proceed to give you a brief account of such a bargain as can only be equaled by the famous Burr conspiracy of 1801. For some time past, the friends of Clay have hinted that they, like the Swiss, would fight for those who pay best. Overtures were said to have been made by the friends of Adams to the friends of Clay, offering him the appointment of Secretary of State, for his aid to elect Adams. And the friends of Clay gave the information to the friends of Jackson, and hinted that if the friends of Jackson would offer the same price, they would close with them. But none of the friends of Jackson would descend to such mean barter and sale. It was not believed by any of the friends of Jackson that this contract would be ratified by the members from the States which had voted for Clay. I was of opinion, when I first heard of this transaction, that men, professing any honorable principles, could not, or would not be transferred, like the planter does his negroes, or the farmer does his team of horses. No alarm was excited. We believed the republic was safe. The nation having delivered Jackson into the hands of Congress, backed by a large majority of their votes, there was on my mind no doubt that Congress would respond to the will of the nation by electing the individual they had declared to be their choice. Contrary to this expectation, it is now ascertained to a certainty that Henry Clay has transferred his interest to John Quincy Adams. As a consideration for this abandonment of duty to his constituents, it is said and believed, should this unholy coalition prevail, Clay is to be appointed Secretary of State. I have no fear on my mind. I am clearly of opinion we shall defeat every combination. The force of public opinion must prevail, or there is an end of liberty.”

II. The editor of the *Columbian Observer* forwarded to Mr. Clay a copy of the paper containing this precious effusion. On the first of February, Mr. Clay replied to it in the *National Intelligencer*, by a card :

“I have seen,” said he, “without any other emotion than that of in-

effable contempt, the abuse which has been poured upon me by a scurrilous paper issued in this city, and by other kindred prints and persons, in regard to the presidential election. The editor of one of those prints, ushered forth in Philadelphia, called the *Columbian Observer*, for which I do not subscribe, and which I have never ordered, has had the impudence to transmit to me his vile paper of the 28th instant. In this number is inserted a letter, purporting to have been written from this city, on the 25th instant, by a member of the House of Representatives, belonging to the Pennsylvania delegation. I believe it to be a forgery; but if it be genuine, I pronounce the member, whoever he may be, a base and infamous calumniator, a dastard, and liar; and if he dare unvail himself, and avow his name, I will hold him responsible, as I here admit myself to be, to all the laws which govern and regulate men of honor."

III. Two days afterward, appeared in the *Intelligencer* a communication, entitled "Another Card," which read as follows :

"George Kremer, of the House of Representatives, tenders his respects to the Honorable H. Clay, and informs him that, by reference to the editor of the *Columbian Observer*, he may ascertain the name of the writer of a letter of the 25th ult., which, it seems, has afforded so much concern to H. Clay. In the mean time, George Kremer holds himself ready to prove, to the satisfaction of unprejudiced minds, enough to satisfy them of the accuracy of the statements which are contained in that letter, to the extent that they concern the course and conduct of H. Clay. Being a representative of the people, he will not fear to 'cry aloud and spare not,' when their rights and privileges are at stake."

This George Kremer was an honest, illiterate rustic, eccentric in costume and manners, a man absurdly out of place in an assembly of educated persons. "Mr. Kremer," wrote Daniel Webster to his brother Ezekiel, "is a man with whom one would think of having a shot, about as soon as with your neighbor, Mr. Simeon Atkinson, whom he somewhat resembles." He was a little, bustling, credulous man of fifty, much stared at in Washington from his wearing a leopard-skin over-coat of curious cut.

IV. Mr. Clay read Kremer's card before going to the House on the morning of February 3d. From his place in the

Speaker's chair he addressed the House on the subject, and demanded an immediate investigation of the charge. 'Standing,' said the Speaker, 'in the relation to the House, which both the member from Pennsylvania and himself did, it appeared to him, that here was the proper place to institute the inquiry, in order that, if guilty, HERE the proper punishment might be applied ; and if innocent, HERE his character and conduct might be vindicated. He anxiously hoped, therefore, that the House would be pleased to order an investigation to be made into the truth of the charges. Emanating from *such* a source as they did, this was the *only* notice which he could take of them.'

Mr. Forsyth moved the appointment of a select committee for the investigation. Whereupon, Mr. Kremer rose and said, that "If, upon investigation being instituted, it should appear that he had not sufficient reason to justify the statements he had made, he trusted he should receive the marked reprobation which had been suggested by the Speaker. Let it fall where it might, he was willing to meet the inquiry, and abide the result."

After a debate of a day and a half, the committee was ordered and appointed. It consisted of seven members, Messrs. Barbour, Webster, M'Laine, Taylor, Forsyth, Saunders, and Rankin.

V. The committee met, and summoned Mr. Kremer to appear before them with the proofs of the charges he had made. Mr. Kremer, in a long, rambling communication, *refused to come before the committee!* The House, he said, had no jurisdiction over the conduct of members out of the House. "I protest, therefore, most solemnly against the assumption of any jurisdiction, either by the committee or the House of Representatives, that shall jeopardize my right to communicate freely to my constituents whatever I may believe necessary for the public good. Whatever assent I may have given, was done hastily, relying on the conscious rectitude of my conduct, and regarding my own case, without having reflected duly on the dangerous principles involved in the pro-

ceedings, and can not therefore be considered as a waiver of my rights. The Speaker's appeal was sudden and unexpected, and if my admission was made, without due regard to all the circumstances and principles of the case, it could be no matter of surprise. In deciding the jurisdiction of the Committee and the House, I feel the authority of *another tribunal*, before which I shall cheerfully appear, and bring forward, forthwith, those facts and circumstances, which, in my opinion, fully authorize the statements contained in my letter. These I shall spread before my constituents, to whom I am amenable for all my conduct."

The explanation of Kremer's conduct is simple and obvious. He was the merest tool of adroit managers. He confessed, in conversation with members, that he did not write the letter which appeared in the *Columbian Observer*. Kremer did not even comprehend the language of the letter. He told Mr. Brent of Louisiana, in the hearing of two other members of Congress, that he never intended to charge Mr. Clay with corrupt conduct. To other gentlemen he said he was willing to apologize to Mr. Clay. It is equally certain that he did not write the communication to the Select Committee. Mr. Clay's bold and manly conduct in bringing the matter before the House, surprised poor Kremer into a promise to substantiate his charge. His managers, however, knew well that such a course would be fatal to their project, which was to confine the discussion of the matter to that "other tribunal," namely, the ignorant and credulous portion of the voters at the next presidential election.

Mr. Clay was of the opinion that the author of the letter in the *Columbian Observer* was Senator John H. Eaton of Tennessee, and that the writer of Kremer's communication to the Select Committee was Samuel D. Ingham, a member of the House from Pennsylvania. There were reasons for this opinion; but as they were not good enough to convert the opinion into certainty, we need not dilate upon them. If Eaton and Ingham were guilty in the dastardly affair, they had their reward—they had their punishment. Mr. Ingham,

it may be well to add, was one of those Pennsylvanians who had originally preferred Mr. Calhoun for the presidency, and *suspended* their efforts in his behalf, in deference to the evident wish of the people.

VI. The Select Committee reported (February 9th, the day of the election) that, as Mr. Kremer had refused to come before them, they could take no further steps. The subject then dropped. The election occurred, and Mr. Clay accepted the office of Secretary of State. General Jackson started homeward, disappointed, indignant, believing himself to have been cheated out of the presidency.

VII. On his journey home, General Jackson was, as before narrated, the object of universal attention. He had to figure in many public receptions, which were the more enthusiastic because of the growing belief among the Jackson men, that he had been unjustly, if not corruptly, deprived of the office to which the people wished to elevate him. The General, it seems, conversed with his partisans upon the late events, with the utmost possible freedom. Some of his remarks were said to have been of a character so extraordinary, that I will not venture to give them in any other language than that of the original reporters. In judging these statements, allowance must be made for the imperfections of the human memory, and for the perverting tendency of political strife ; these statements having been made during the fury and madness of 1828.

Daniel Large, of Philadelphia, testified : “On my way down the Ohio, from Wheeling to Cincinnati, in the month of March, 1825, on board the steamer *General Neville*, among many other passengers were General Jackson and a number of gentlemen from Pennsylvania, some of whom remarked to the General that they regretted that he had not been elected President instead of Mr. Adams. General Jackson replied, *that if he would have made the same promises and offers to Mr. Clay that Mr. Adams had done*, he (General Jackson) would then, in that case, have been in the presidential chair. But he would make no promises to any ; that if he went to the presidential chair, he would go with clean hands, and un-

controlled by any one. These remarks of General Jackson were made in the hearing of Mr. James Parker, of Chester county, Mr. William Crowsdill, of this city, and myself, and a number of other gentlemen unknown to me."

William Crowsdill, of Philadelphia, testified that "the statement made by Mr. Daniel Large is a faithful account of General Jackson's conversation on the occasion alluded to."

William Sample testified that, meeting General Jackson on the same journey, he had said to him, "Well, General, we did all we could for you here, but the rascals cheated you out of it;" to which the General replied, "Indeed, my old friend, there was cheating, and corruption, and bribery, too. The editors of the *National Intelligencer* were bribed to suppress honest George Kremer's letter." These words, added Mr. Sample, were uttered in a "room full of gentlemen."

Two persons testified that they heard a Mr. Sloan narrate a conversation he had had with General Jackson about the same time, in the course of which the General said that, early one morning, Mr. Clay called on him at his lodgings, which was quite an unusual circumstance, and after a few compliments had passed, Mr. Clay observed: "General, I have no doubt of your election now." The General stated: "I read his heart in a moment," but replied to Mr. Clay that "if elected, he would exercise his best judgment in executing the duties of his office;" that Mr. Clay, meeting with no encouragement, politely bid him good morning, and left the room; and in a few days he understood that Mr. Clay had declared himself in favor of John Q. Adams. "This," said the General, "Mr. Clay will not have the hardihood to stand before me and deny." The General further stated, by way of comment, that there was no doubt, had he observed to Mr. Clay, "If I am elected, I will do something for you," that he (Jackson) would have been the President.

The most circumstantial statement, however, was that of the Rev. A. Wylie, a noted clergyman of that day:

“WASHINGTON, February 15th, 1828.

“When General Jackson arrived at Bunland's, on his return from Congress, in the spring of 1825, the agitation of the public mind was extreme, from the belief then prevalent that his elevation to the presidency had been prevented by intrigue and management on the part of Messrs. Adams and Clay. My own mind, I confess, was not altogether undisturbed on this subject, feeling, as the head of a family—who, in the common course of nature, must share after me in the destinies of our beloved country—a deep interest in the preservation of our liberties, which I believed, from what I knew of the history of republics, were not likely to perish in any popular convulsions, until the people themselves should first find their rights invaded by those in power. Feeling, from the force of such considerations, a sympathy for General Jackson, I was induced, though I had no previous personal acquaintance with him, to pay him my respects. The following dialogue took place :

“A. ‘You return, General, from a boisterous campaign.’

“B. ‘Yes, sir.’

“A. ‘One in which you were not quite so successful as in some former ones.’

“B. ‘My success in those to which you allude was owing to the firmness of the brave men whom I had the honor to command.’

“A. ‘It is more honorable, however, to lose than to win in such a contest as that lately concluded at the federal city, if, indeed, things were managed as has been reported.’

“B. ‘And who can doubt it?’

“A. ‘Why, General, one would hardly suppose that such men as J. Q. Adams and H. Clay would, in the face of the nation, engage in such a transaction.’

“B. ‘But let any man in his senses take a view of the circumstances—let him compare for instance, the prediction of honest George Kremer with its accomplishment.’

“A. ‘But were not the talents and local situation of Mr. Clay sufficient to justify the confident expectation of his appointment. There is, however, another circumstance, which, if true, will settle the point.’

“B. ‘What is that?’

“A. ‘The proposition that is said to have been made to *you*—is that a *fact*?’

“B. ‘Yes, sir, such a proposition *was* made. I said to the bearer—‘Go tell Mr. Clay, tell Mr. Adams, that if I go into that chair, I go with clean hands and a pure heart, and that I had rather see them, together with myself, engulfed to the earth's center, than to compass it by such means.’ The very next day or shortly after (which of the expressions it



was is not now recollected), Mr. Clay and his friends declared for Mr Adams.'

"Such was the conversation, as nearly as can be recollected. It was rapid, and carried on in such a tone of voice as not to be heard by many in the room. The Messrs. Murdocks, who, I believe, were present, must have heard a part of it. Most of the sentences were not announced in full, but taken up and answered by the parties as soon as their drift and bearing were understood, except the last, which was pronounced emphatically. Of this I am the more certain, as it made an impression which was, on my mind, deep and vivid."

Mr. J. H. Waring furnished the following: "I was present at one of these conversations, when the General observed, in speaking of the late election, that '*the people had been cheated; that the corruptions and intrigues of Washington had defeated the will of the people in the election of their President.*' I waited till this branch of the conversation was closed, and finding no palliative, left the company, which was large, and composed of ladies and gentlemen of the first respectability, and at a public tavern. Several followed, and his remarks became the subject of street conversation, in which I remarked, that, highly as I was disposed to think of the General, particularly for his military success, I could not approve such a course; that if corruption existed, and that known to him, he surely should not have been the first to greet Mr. Adams upon his elevation."

VIII. None of these remarkable utterances found their way into print at that time; but the poison worked in the mind of the unsuspecting voter. Kremer kept his promise to refer the matter to "another tribunal." "Are the charges true?" he asked on the stump. "Can any one doubt it, who considers that Mr. Clay has *performed the act*, which the letter charges him with *intending* to do, and now holds the office, which was *proclaimed* as the consideration for the service rendered?" Imagine nonsense of this kind repeated in a thousand newspapers, roared from a thousand stumps, insinuated in a thousand congressional appeals to rural Buncombe; Mr. Adams silent meanwhile, from a sense of official

decorum ; Mr. Clay silent for lack of a responsible accuser, for lack of a tangible accusation.

IX. At length, however, General Jackson was brought before the public as the accuser of Mr. Clay.

In the spring of 1827, a large party was dining one day at the Hermitage, when General Jackson used language with regard to Mr. Clay similar to that which he employed on his way home from Washington, in 1825. Among the company present were several gentlemen from Virginia, one of whom was the afterward famous Carter Beverly, a member of one the "First Families." Another gentleman present on the the occasion was a young New Yorker, Silas M. Stilwell, afterward a leading New York politician, and still living among us. Mr. Stilwell was so alarmed at the General's "imprudence," that he ventured, after dinner, to remonstrate with him, saying that among so large a company there was sure to be some one who would imprudently repeat what had been so imprudently uttered.

"Oh, you Yankees !" exclaimed the General, laughing ; "how suspicious you all are ! Why these are Virginia gentlemen. Not one of them would repeat any thing he has heard at my table."

Mr. Stilwell was right, however. Shortly afterward (March 8th, 1827), the following letter, from Carter Beverly to a friend, found its way, as such letters will, into the columns of a newspaper of North Carolina :

"I have just returned from General Jackson's. I found a crowd of company with him. Seven Virginians were of the number. He gave me a most friendly reception, and urged me to stay some days longer with him. He told me this morning, *before all his company*, in reply to a question that I put to him concerning the election of J. Q. Adams to the presidency, that Mr. Clay's *friends* made a proposition to *his* friends, that, if they would promise, *for him* [General Jackson] *not* to put Mr. Adams into the seat of Secretary of State, Mr. Clay and his friends would, *in one hour*, make *him* [Jackson] the President. He [General Jackson] most indignantly rejected the proposition, and declared he would not compromit himself; and unless most openly and fairly made the President by Congress, he would never receive it. He declared, that he said to them, he

would see the whole earth sink under them, before he would *bargain* or intrigue for it."

This letter immediately went the round of the press, eliciting comment exultant or indignant, according to the political character of the editor printing it. The veracity of the author having been called in question, he wrote to General Jackson to confirm his statements. General Jackson replied at length ; and this letter also was surreptitiously copied and printed.

General Jackson's letter to Mr. Beverly contained the following narrative :

" Early in January, 1825, a member of Congress, of high respectability, visited me one morning, and observed that he had a communication he was desirous to make to me ; that he was informed there was a great intrigue going on, and that it was right I should be informed of it ; that he came as a friend, and let me receive the communication as I might, the friendly motives through which it was made he hoped would prevent any change of friendship or feeling in regard to him. To which I replied, from his high standing as a gentleman and member of Congress, and from his uniform friendly and gentlemanly conduct toward myself, I could not suppose he would make any communication to me which he supposed was improper. Therefore, his motives being pure, let me think as I might of the communication, my feelings toward him would remain unaltered. The gentleman proceeded : He said he had been informed by the friends of Mr. Clay, that the friends of Mr. Adams had made overtures to them, saying, if Mr. Clay and his friends would unite in aid of Mr. Adams' election, Mr. Clay should be Secretary of State ; that the friends of Mr. Adams were urging, as a reason to induce the friends of Mr. Clay to accede to their proposition, that if I were elected President, Mr. Adams would be continued Secretary of State (innuendo, there would be no room for Kentucky) ; that the friends of Mr. Clay stated, the West did not wish to separate from the West, and if I would say, or permit any of my confidential friends to say, that in case I were elected President, Mr. Adams should not be continued Secretary of State, by a complete union of Mr. Clay and his friends, they would put an end to the presidential contest in one hour. And he was of opinion it was right to fight such intriguers with their own weapons. To which, in substance, I replied—that in politics, as in every thing else, my guide was principle ; and contrary to the expressed and unbiassed will of the people, I never would step into the presidential chair ;

and requested him to say to Mr. Clay and his friends (for I did suppose he had come from Mr. Clay, although he used the term of 'Mr. Clay's friends') that before I would reach the presidential chair by such means of bargain and corruption, I would see the earth open and swallow both Mr. Clay and his friends, and myself with them. If they had not confidence in me to believe, if I were elected, that I would call to my aid in the cabinet men of the first virtue, talent, and integrity, not to vote for me. The second day after this communication and reply, it was announced in the newspapers that Mr. Clay had come out openly and avowedly in favor of Mr. Adams. It may be proper to observe, that, on the supposition that Mr. Clay was not privy to the proposition stated, I may have done injustice to him. If so, the gentleman informing me can explain."

X. Upon obtaining a copy of this letter, Mr. Clay published "a direct, unqualified and indignant denial," and called upon General Jackson for proof. "Such being the accusation, and the prosecutor, and the issue between us," concluded Mr. Clay, "I have now a right to expect that he will substantiate his charges, by the exhibition of satisfactory evidence. In that event, there is no punishment that would exceed the measure of my offense. In the opposite event, what ought to be the judgment of the American public, is cheerfully submitted to their wisdom and justice."

XI. General Jackson replied at great length. But the only passage that touched the issue was this: "This disclosure was made to me by MR. JAMES BUCHANAN."

General Jackson concluded his long address with a remark which shows that he had forgotten some of the incidents of his homeward journey, in the spring of 1825. "The origin," says he, "the beginning of this matter, was at my own house and fireside—where, surely, a freeman may be permitted to speak on public topics, without having ascribed to him improper designs. I have not gone into the highways and market-places to proclaim my opinions, and in this, feel that I have differed from some, who, even at public dinner-tables, have not scrupled to consider me a legitimate subject for speech and the entertainment of the company. And yet, for this, who has heard me complain? No one. Trusting to the justice of an intelligent people, I have been content to

rely for security on their decision, against the countless assaults and slanders, which are sought so repeatedly to be palmed upon them, without seeking to present myself in my own defense ; and still less to become the 'responsible accuser' of Mr. Clay, or any other person."

XII. Mr. Buchanan, thus unexpectedly appealed to in the hearing of the whole nation, found himself in an awkward position. Locked in the memories of Mr. Clay and his friend Letcher, was a little story, given on a preceding page, which, though innocent enough, would have had an undesirable effect, if told just then, upon the class of voters who were represented by such men as the Honorable George Kremer. On the other hand, how could Mr. Buchanan contradict his chief? In these perplexing circumstances, Mr. Buchanan promptly took the witness stand, and completely exonerated Mr. Clay. In a long communication to the editor of the *Lancaster Journal*, he gave the following statement :

"The duty which I owe to the public, and to myself, now compels me to publish to the world the only conversation which I ever held with General Jackson, upon the subject of the last presidential election, prior to its termination." . . . "On the 30th of December, 1824, (I am able to fix the time, not only from my own recollection, but from letters which I wrote on that day, on the day following, and on the 2d of January, 1825,) I called upon General Jackson. After the company had left him, by which I found him surrounded, he asked me to take a walk with him; and, while we were walking together upon the street, I introduced the subject. I told him I wished to ask him a question in relation to the presidential election; that I knew he was unwilling to converse upon the subject; that, therefore, if he deemed the question improper, he might refuse to give it an answer: that my only motive in asking it, was friendship for him, and I trusted he would excuse me for thus introducing a subject about which I knew he wished to be silent. His reply was complimentary to myself, and accompanied with a request that I would proceed. I then stated to him there was a report in circulation, that he had determined he would appoint Mr. Adams Secretary of State, in case he were elected President, and that I wished to ascertain from him whether he had ever intimated such an intention; that he must at once perceive how injurious to his election such a report might be; that no doubt there were several able and ambitious men in the country, among whom I thought Mr. Clay might be included,

who were aspiring to that office; and, if it were believed he had already determined to appoint his chief competitor, it might have a most unhappy effect upon their exertions, and those of their friends; that, unless he had so determined, I thought this report should be promptly contradicted under his own authority. I mentioned it had already probably done him some injury. . . . After I had finished, the General declared he had not the least objection to answer my question; that he thought well of Mr. Adams, but he never said or intimated that he would, or would not, appoint him Secretary of State; that these were secrets he would keep to himself—he would conceal them from the very hairs of his head; that if he believed his right hand then knew what his left would do on the subject of appointments to office, he would cut it off and cast it into the fire; that if he ever should be elected President, it would be without solicitation, and without intrigue, on his part; that he would then go into office perfectly free and untrammelled, and would be left at perfect liberty to fill the offices of the government with the men whom, at the time, he believed to be the ablest and the best in the country. I told him that this answer to my question was such a one as I had expected to receive, if he answered it at all; and that I had not sought to obtain it for my own satisfaction. I then asked him if I were at liberty to repeat his answer? He said that I was at perfect liberty to do so, to any person I thought proper. I need scarcely remark that I afterward availed myself of the privilege. The conversation on this topic here ended, and in all our intercourse since, whether personally, or in the course of our correspondence, General Jackson never once adverted to the subject, prior to the date of his letter to Mr. Beverly. I called upon General Jackson, upon the occasion which I have mentioned, solely as his friend, upon my individual responsibility, and not as the agent of Mr. Clay or any other person."

Mr. Clay and his friends exulted exceedingly, and thought the day their own. "I could not desire," wrote Clay to a friend, "a stronger statement from Mr. Buchanan. The tables are completely turned upon the General. Instead of any intrigues on my part and that of my friends, they were altogether on the side of General Jackson and his friends." Daniel Webster wrote to Mr. Clay: "I do not think that General Jackson can ever recover from the blow which he has received. Many persons think Buchanan's letter candid, I deem it otherwise. It seems to me to be labored very hard to protect the General, as far as he could, without injury to himself. Although the General's friends,

this way, however, affect to consider Buchanan's letter as supporting the charge, it is possible the General himself, and the *Nashville Commentators* may think otherwise, and complain of Buchanan. I should expect this with some confidence if they received the letter a little earlier than they may have seen the turn which the Atlantic editors have attempted to give it. As these last have pretty generally agreed to say that the letter does support the General, the *Nashville Commentators*, if they see the example in season, may be disposed to follow it."

The General himself did think otherwise, though he did not tell the public so. Long afterward he wrote to his friend Major Lewis: "Your observations with regard to Mr. Buchanan are correct. He showed a want of moral courage in the affair of the intrigue of Adams and Clay—did not do me justice in the exposé he then made, and I am sure about that time did believe there was a perfect understanding between Adams and Clay about the presidency and the Secretary of State. This I am sure of. But whether he viewed that there was any corruption in the case or not, I know not; but one thing I do know, that he wished me to combat them with their own weapons—that was, let my friends say if I was elected I would make Mr. Clay Secretary of State. This, to me, appeared deep corruption, and I repelled it with that honest indignation as I thought it deserved."

General Jackson made no further publication on the subject at the time. He retired from the discussion.

XIII. Mr. Clay, however, deemed it proper to vindicate himself still more completely. He caused a circular letter to be addressed to every member of the House of Representatives who voted for Mr. Adams, restating General Jackson's charge of bargain and corruption, and asking whether he (the member addressed) knew or believed that such a bargain had been made.

To these questions every member but two sent prompt replies, exonerating Mr. Clay and his friends in the most unequivocal and emphatic language.

The eloquent words of Mr. Adams on the subject, uttered when there was no longer a personal motive for uttering them, are well known : “ Prejudice and passion have charged Mr. Clay with obtaining office by bargain and corruption. Before you, my fellow-citizens, in the presence of our country and Heaven, I pronounce that charge totally unfounded. This tribute of justice is due from me to him, and I seize with pleasure the opportunity afforded me of discharging the obligation. As to my motives for tendering to him the department of State when I did, let that man who questions them come forward ; let him look around among statesmen and legislators of this nation, and of that day ; let him then select and name the man whom, by his preëminent talents, by his splendid services, by his ardent patriotism, by his all-embracing public spirit, by his fervid eloquence in behalf of the rights and liberties of mankind, and by his long experience in the affairs of the Union, foreign and domestic, a President of the United States, intent only upon the welfare and honor of his country, ought to have preferred to Henry Clay. Let him name the man, and then judge you, my fellow-citizens, of my motives.”

XIV. General Jackson never retracted the charge of bargain, nor ceased to believe in the guilt of Mr. Adams and Mr. Clay. During the last year but one of his life, Mr. Clay being a candidate for the presidency, he wrote the following card for publication in the *Nashville Union*, and it was published in that newspaper in May, 1844 :

“ My attention has been called to various newspaper articles, referring to a letter said to have been written by me to General Hamilton, recanting the charge of bargain made against Mr. Clay, when he voted for Mr. Adams in 1825.

“ To put an end to all such rumors, I feel it to be due to myself to state, that I have no recollection of ever having written such a letter, and do not believe there is a letter from me to General Hamilton, or any one else, that will bear such a construction. Of the charges brought against both Mr. Adams and Mr. Clay, at that time I formed my opinion as the country at large did—from facts and circumstances that were indisputable and conclusive ; and I may add, that this opinion has undergone no change.



"If General Hamilton, or any one else, has a letter from me on this subject, all that they have to do is to apply to him for it. As for myself, I have no secrets, and do not fear the publication of all that I have ever written on this or any other subject."

These are all the facts relating to the charge of bargain and corruption which are essential to the proper understanding of it. No charge was ever more plausible or more groundless, unless it be that which ruined Aaron Burr's political prospects in 1801 ; and, with that exception, none was ever more completely refuted. The refutation was as public as the accusation. Why, then, did seven-tenths of the voters of the United States believe it ? Why did it overthrow an administration, and frustrate for ever the cherished hopes of Mr. Clay's friends ?

First, Mr. Clay's conduct, in giving Mr. Adams the presidency, was undemocratic. This republic was set up on a certain principle, and the spirit of that principle required that Andrew Jackson, of Tennessee, should have been elected President by the House of Representatives, on the 9th of February, 1825. The principle may be wrong. Time may prove it to be wrong. Federalists then thought it wrong. But the republican party obtained power, and for twenty-four years retained the supremacy, because it professed a contrary belief, because it thought the fundamental principle of the government right, feasible, and safe. When Mr. Clay, before the result of the popular election was known, announced to his friends in Kentucky that he could conceive of no circumstances whatever which would induce him to support General Jackson for the presidency, he seemed to show a defective faith in the cardinal principle of his party and of the Constitution. His party naturally resented the defection. As a private citizen he was not bound to support General Jackson ; but as a representative in Congress, his task was to ascertain and to indulge the obvious desires of the people whose representative he was.

Secondly, The voters of the United States might then be

divided into three classes. First, there were the voters who were patriotic enough to take a hearty interest in the politics of their country, and intelligent enough to be swayed by arguments addressed to the understanding. Such voters are the salt of the nation, who have preserved it—who now sustain it—who will deliver it. But they were not a majority. Then, there was a class of voters who were intelligent enough to be swayed by arguments addressed to the understanding, but not patriotic enough to take an interest in politics—rich people, who drew large revenues from the country they affected to despise—over-refined scholars, who dawdled in Paris, when they should have been instructing their countrymen at home—dainty philosophers, who surveyed the arena from a safe distance, and discoursed knowingly about it, when they should have stripped and entered, and done brave battle, showing blackguards how gentlemen can fight, and driving them in ignominy from the ring.

But these two classes combined were not a majority in 1825. In the present happy year of our Lord, we are all of us free and enlightened citizens, of course. But the events with which we are now occupied occurred thirty-five years ago, when there was an immense number of people in the country who were not intelligent enough to be moved by arguments addressed to the understanding. There were voters who could feel, but not think ; listen to stump orations, but not read ; comprehend the logic of a Kremer, but not that of Henry Clay ; who could be wheedled, and flattered, and drilled by any man who was quite devoid of public spirit, principle, and shame, but could be influenced by no man of honor, unless he was also a man of genius. This was the fatal class of voters. Here was the field of the managing politician. These were the voters who were the hope of the schemer, the despair of the patriot. They were numerous in 1825.

And so the Jacksonians had their cry for 1828. You may be sure they kept it ringing.

Yet no cry, however telling, no enthusiasm, however wild

and general, ever carried a presidential election, nor ever will. The union of a powerful southern interest with a respectable northern one, or the union of a powerful northern with a respectable southern interest, has been always deemed essential to success by knowing politicians, and has always been essential hitherto. General Jackson, as a candidate for the presidency, was nothing in 1824, till Pennsylvania took him up, and would have been elected in 1824, if New York had joined Pennsylvania. New York must be brought into line in 1828. Who will do it for him?

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## CHAPTER XI.

### MARTIN VAN BUREN.

Yes, Martin Van Buren, late the opponent of Jackson, the ally of Crawford. Not De Witt Clinton, who had been for many years General Jackson's friend and eulogist, and who, it was supposed, cherished an expectation of succeeding him in the presidency. Mr. Van Buren must do the work, or it will not be done. Mr. Clinton was no politician. Mr. Van Buren was the politician of the State.

But how are we to know any thing about a man who was supposed to excel all men in concealing his motives and his movements? If one could get a peep at the pages of that autobiography which Mr. Van Buren is preparing for publication after his death! But as that can not be, we must resort to other sources of information. It is something, however, to know that Mr. Van Buren feels that the story of his life is one which will bear telling.

From long poring over all the materials accessible, I have come to know that the serious charges against this gentleman are either untrue, or less than half true. Conceding that politics is a game, I find that he has never grabbed nor silyly filched the stakes, but played fairly, according to the "usages

of the party." Few men have been more hated. It is comforting to honest blunderers to know that no man is so hated as he who makes it a point to have no enemies, and in no man are so many faults discovered as in him who never commits one.

Martin Van Buren, like the party of which he was a leader, learned his principles from Thomas Jefferson, and his tactics from Aaron Burr. This remark explains both his career and his party's.

Columbia County in the State of New York was noted, in the olden time, as the residence of certain opulent families. There the Livingstons had their seat ; there the Van Rensselaers had large possessions ; and around the great proprietors gathered a considerable number of connections and friends, forming a circle who held a position in the county similar to that of the great families in a county of England. Here, in 1782, when as yet the distinction was marked between patrician and plebian, Martin Van Buren was born. He was born in a log-house. His father was a worthy, illiterate man, who cultivated a small farm, and kept a small tavern. He was a man of such imperturbable good temper, that he never had a quarrel in his life. His wife, we are told, was the motive-power of the family—an active, polite person, fond of politics, and uncommonly sagacious in the management of her affairs.

Martin was a bright, lively, handsome boy. He went to the village school, and had no other educational advantages. His familiar letters, down to a late period of his life, contain grammatical slips. Apprenticed in his fourteenth year to the village attorney, he was compelled, by a statute then in force, to serve seven years before getting his license to practice. The law then made a distinction in favor of students who had received a classical education—admitting them to practice after three years, study of the law.

Before he had completed his term of study, we find the youth in New York, a student in the office of William P. Van Ness, who is still famous as the friend and second of Colonel Burr, in his lamentable duel with General Hamilton. Burr was then at the height of his career, Vice-President of

the United States, and as it was supposed, the candidate for the succession to the presidency. He lived in great style; had his country house and town house: and dispensed in both a lavish hospitality which he could ill afford. He never appeared so imposing or so strong as then, when he stood on the flowery verge of ruin. The young student, it appears, was thrown into frequent contact with this shining figure, who inherited from his father a passion for protégés. Burr was struck with the beauty and talents, the diligence and energy of the country youth, and we are told, made an impression upon his forming character, and communicated to him the results of his experience in politics and law.

The life-maxims of the Vice-President the student certainly did not imbibe. Mr. Van Buren's private conduct has always been correct, and though of a generous and helpful disposition, he early and always practiced the art of living within his income.

Aaron Burr's politics were learned in the camp. Enamored of military life, he conducted his business, after the return of peace, upon military principles. He liked to regard himself as a kind of general-in-law, his clerks as aids-de-court, and to have his orders obeyed with the silent promptness of military discipline. When he, unhappily, turned politician, and became the manager of a party, he adhered to the same system. A party, he would maintain, in order to carry elections, must submit to discipline; must execute faithfully, and even blindly, the decrees of its leaders. Whatever is decided upon in the conclaves of the legitimate and recognized chiefs is LAW to the rank and file, which they must execute to the letter, on pain of proscription.

If the Burrian Code were written out, *as time developed it*, it would contain, I imagine, the following propositions:

#### THE CODE OF THE NEW YORK POLITICIAN.

- I. Politics is a Game, the prizes of which are offices and contracts.
- II. The Game, so far as Our Side is concerned, must be played with strict fairness. With respect to the Other Side, all is fair in politics, as in war.
- III. In elective governments, all politics necessarily resolve themselves

into a contest for the highest place. That gained, all is gained. To that end, therefore, everything else is to be subordinate.

IV. The people are sovereign—as Queen Victoria is sovereign. Treated always with the profoundest deference, the sovereign in NOTHING. In England the ministers, in America the politicians, are everything. But the sovereign is to be humored to the top of his bent, and so led.

V. Fidelity to party is the sole virtue of the politician. He only is a politician who would vote unhesitatingly for the Devil, if the Devil were regularly nominated. One sin only is unpardonable—bolting.

VI. No man must be allowed to suffer on account of his fidelity to his party. No matter how odious to the people he may have made himself by his fidelity, he must be provided for the moment it can be safely done.

VII. The party door must always stand wide open for the reception of converts from the other side, but shut rigorously against repentant renegades.

VIII. Personal enmities are to be most scrupulously avoided. In dealing with an opponent, he must be treated with a view to his one day becoming “one of us.”

IX. Nothing is more fatal in politics than a premature publication of the programme. Nothing is to be done to-day which can as well be done to-morrow. A surprise is often half a victory.

X. Every partisan must contribute to a contest both according to his means and his disposition; rich, liberal men, money; rich, mean men, influence and name; active men, labor; idle men, the show of their presence; eloquent men, eloquence; cool, shrewd men, management and direction; all men, without one exception, votes.

XI. Local organization is the main reliance for victory. Every ward, town, village, hamlet, neighborhood, must have its party organization—its every voter recorded and his disposition ascertained and noted down.

XII. A great State influence is the preliminary and price of national distinction. No man can be great in Washington who is not master of his own State; who is not the Clay of Kentucky, the Crawford of Georgia, the Calhoun of South Carolina, the Webster of Massachusetts. On the same principle, a man must be preëminent in his County, before he can be powerful at Albany. Political distinction, like charity, must begin at home. It must have an impregnable basis of locality, and expand from a fixed center. A man who carries a County in his pocket can have what he wants at Albany; a man who is master of a State can have his choice of the pickings at Washington.

XIII. When there is a conflict between the party in the whole Union and the party in the State, or between the party in the State and the party in the county, a man must adhere to the behests of a majority of his own local organization. That is to say, a private must obey the orders of his

own immediate captain, though that captain may be in mutiny against his colonel. That is the captain's affair, not the private's. Thus, if Tompkins is the regular nominee of the party in New York, and Crawford is the regular nominee of the party in the Union, the New York democrat must support Tompkins, until the party leaders in New York decide to drop Tompkins.

XIV. It is a great art to enlist young men in the cause. Young men work more and demand less than old men. Besides, they have faith; a commodity unknown to the old politician.

XV. In a political manager many qualities are desirable, but only one is indispensable, namely, discretion.

XVI. Many men can speak; few can hold their tongue. Many men can act; few know how to wait. One half the politician's art consists in silence and waiting. As that helmsman is most skillful who keeps the ship to her course with the fewest movements of the helm, as that is the great chess-player who wins by the fewest moves, so that politician will best succeed who speaks seldom, does little, and writes never. But when he does move, the result must be an era.

XVII. A politician once well on the course, and fit to be upon it, can only be destroyed by his own hands.

XVIII. Newspapers are indispensable auxiliaries. Editors are to be unscrupulously used, but never implicitly trusted. An editor who is, in fortune, one degree above the starvation point, is in the condition most favorable to complete efficiency. When an editor has become personally powerful, or even pecuniarily independent, his utility as a party tool is gone. If he shows the slightest symptom of restiveness or aspiration, the very highest talent the party can command must be brought to bear in effecting his suppression.

XIX. The end and aim of the professional politician is to keep great men down, and to push little men up. Little men, owing all to the wire-puller, will be governed by him. Great men, having ideas and convictions, are perilous, even as tools; must be used cautiously, and never advanced to posts of influence and honor. Indeed, it were better to abolish them altogether.

How much of this precious system our young student learned from its founder, and how much he gathered from the attached disciples who surrounded him, I know not. It is evident that some of these ideas found lodgment in his mind, and were exemplified in his conduct. The fatal flaw in the system is the smallness of its object. The calamity of poor Burr was, that he had not understanding enough to

*take the idea* of the new republic. He attached the puerile European value to PLACE, ignorant of the truth that he who serves his country in a public office is no more honorable than he who serves it in his private shop. The superior dignity of simple citizenship to any post in the gift of citizens was never apparent to him. He thought the servant was greater than the master.

Mr. Van Buren returned to his native village in 1803, twenty-one years of age, and hung out his sign-board, notifying the public that Van Buren and Miller were attorneys-at-law. Politics were the absorbing topic in Columbia county. Mr. Van Buren was known there as a rather extreme Jeffersonian, a strict constructionist, a stickler for State rights. He acted in accordance with the Burrian code in 1804, by voting against Colonel Burr when he ran for the governorship of New York, in opposition to the regular republican candidate. He sided with the Clintons, and other devotees of New York, against Mr. Jefferson's embargo. Mr. Van Buren, however, during the next six years after settling in Kinderhook, was chiefly a zealous and laborious village lawyer, winning his way to a wider sphere by doing the best for his clients there.

Then he removed to Hudson, the capital of his county, where for seven years more he toiled at the bar, dividing the business of the county with a federalist rival. Keen were the encounters, it is said, between these able men. Mr. Van Buren ever cool, vigilant, adroit, courteous, persuasive; gaining something even from defeat. His support of Mr. Daniel D. Tompkins for the governorship, in 1808, procured him the office of surrogate of Columbia, which he held four years, and was then removed to make way for the restoration of the gentleman whose removal had created a vacancy for himself.

Thus early in New York was the execrable system in vogue of distributing offices among victorious partisans, as soldiers divide the spoils of conquest. Mr. Van Buren has often been accused of introducing this odious feature of partisan strife. The truth is, however, that twice he was its



victim before ever he had held a position which placed it in his power either to remove or to appoint. It was a fault in him that he did not exert all his influence to put an end to a system which tends to take government out of the hands of honest men, and hand it over to the custody of blackguards. He ought to have done this ; and the more, as his instincts revolt at such a perversion of a public trust. When himself holding power, he has reduced the removals to the minimum of the supposed party necessities. "I prefer an office," he once said, "which has no patronage. When I give a man an office, I offend his disappointed competitors and their friends, and make enemies of the man I remove and his friends. Nor am I certain of gaining a friend in the man I appoint, for, in all probability, he expected something better."

Governor Tompkins, by his election to the vice-presidency, and still more by indulging in a habit induced by his pecuniary misfortunes, was removed from the sphere of competition. Then the politics of New York were resolved into a struggle for supremacy between the proud, patriotic, maladroitness Clinton, and the imperturbable, skillful, courteous, reticent Van Buren. The Republican party was divided into two well-balanced factions, Clintonians and Bucktails ; the Bucktails, so named from a branch of the Tammany Society wearing the tail of a deer in their hats. The Bucktails were reckoned the extreme democrats, the radicals. Indeed, they were frequently styled Radicals by their opponents, and in 1824, Mr. Crawford was often called the Radical Candidate, and the caucus that nominated him the Radical Caucus.

Dr. Hammond hits off the public character of De Witt Clinton in a sentence : "His objects were always magnificent, his ends were always such as evinced an elevated and lofty mind, but he did not seem to be aware of the necessity of providing ways and means to accomplish those ends." Of his rival, Martin Van Buren, we may observe that, whether his objects were magnificent or the contrary, whether his ends evinced a lofty or a common mind, he was always thoroughly

aware of the necessity of providing ways and means to accomplish them.

The politics of the State of New York are supposed to be beyond the comprehension of a finite being. From the early days of its adhesion to the Union, its politics have been involved, embittered, and, I may add, ignoble, to an unexampled degree. Great families, rival factions, ambitious men, have striven and schemed, with amazing pertinacity, not so much for the welfare and honor of the State, as for the possession of the lucrative offices which its early wealth created, and its early folly left open to ceaseless competition. Besides the great prizes which the State itself held out to successful management, there was an impression in the public mind that the State of New York, with its large population and important commerce, was entitled to give a President to the Union ; and that it only remained for some one of her citizens to acquire a State preëminence and a respectable national reputation, to secure the prize. The secret aim, then, of the leading politicians seems to have been to keep down their rivals ; while politicians in other States, particularly, those who were identified with the "Virginian dynasty," were supposed to have an interest in preventing any New Yorker from over-topping his competitors.

In 1812, when Mr. Van Buren first appeared in Albany as a member of the legislature, that extraordinary man, De Witt Clinton, had just been put in nomination for the presidency against Mr. Madison. He expected support from two classes of citizens ; first, those who were opposed to the war ; secondly, those who thought Mr. Madison ill-fitted to conduct the war with success. Mr. Van Buren, in accordance with the principles of the New York democracy, supported Mr. Clinton, and contributed, perhaps, more than any other man to the respectable vote which Clinton received. In 1816, Governor Tompkins was the choice of New York for the presidency, and Mr. Van Buren adhered to the decree of his party. He went to Washington to electioneer for Mr. Tompkins, but ascertaining that the ex-governor could not obtain the

nomination of the Congressional Caucus, he supported his claims coldly, and offered no serious opposition to those of Mr. Crawford.

Mr. Van Buren inherited from his father a temper that nothing could ruffle, and he possessed an unrivaled talent for holding his tongue. His principles and his disposition equally impelled him to be courteous to all men. Compelled by his position in the republican ranks to be generally in opposition to Governor Clinton, he conducted the warfare, according to Dr. Hammond, on such principles and in such a manner, that Clinton himself, a few days before his death, confessed that he had no just cause of complaint against him. The hasty private letters of Mr. Van Buren which were surreptitiously published, some years ago, by Mr. William L. Mackenzie, do not reveal to us the dishonest politician, nor the self-seeker regardless of right and propriety, and bent on gaining advancement by all means, fair and foul. They show us, on the contrary, a quiet, jovial, gentlemanlike, vigilant lawyer conducting the affairs of a party in accordance with the usages which he found established ; and conducting them with a nice regard to the claims of partisans and a real concern for the public interest. The great statesman, intent only on the public good, identified *only* with great principles and great measures, they do not exhibit to us.

Mr. Van Buren has been strikingly faithful to his friends. It is honorable to him that when Col. Burr returned home in 1812, ruined past hope, and so odious that a man incurred odium who was known to be his friend, Mr. Van Buren, then just entering public life, not only called upon him, but received him into his own house as a guest. It is possible that the subsequent zeal of Mr. Van Buren for the abolition of imprisonment for debt, and his later efforts to secure pensions for revolutionary officers, were, in some degree, stimulated by his knowledge that Burr had a personal interest in both those measures. In the same spirit he came powerfully to the rescue of his friend, Governor Tompkins, when the Governor, owing to his careless or unskillful book-keeping,

was in danger of being both ruined and disgraced as a public defaulter. Mr. Van Buren's speech on the Governor's behalf occupied nearly two days. Dr. Hammond says: "It was one of the most ingenious, able, and eloquent speeches I ever heard. It has been the custom of the opponents of this gentleman, both in the State and nation, to give him credit for great tact and management as a mere politician, and to deny that he possesses those high and exalted powers of mind which always distinguish the great statesman and the commanding parliamentary orator. But any fair-minded man, who has heard Mr. Van Buren on great and important questions in our legislative assemblies, whether state or national, will not hesitate to award him the meed of high merit."

One of Mr. Van Buren's public acts claims our attention for a moment, before proceeding to his agency in the presidential campaign of 1828. In the New York Constitutional Convention of 1821, he had the courage and wisdom to insist that true democracy does not require the manifest absurdity of what is falsely called "universal suffrage." He contended that while the path leading to the dignity of voter should be open equally to all men, yet every man aspiring to that rank in the commonwealth should give some evidence of fitness to discharge its obligations understandingly. He adhered to the old world qualification, it is true, which is to be regretted; but no other had then been thought of. A voter, he maintained, should at least be a householder. He deprecated the "abandoning of all qualifications, and throwing open the ballot-boxes to every body—demolishing, at one blow, the distinctive character of an elector, the proudest and most invaluable attribute of freemen."

Some of the reasons given by Mr. Van Buren for his course on this question have a particular interest for the inhabitants of the city of New York:

"Among the many evils," said he, "which would flow from a wholly unrestricted suffrage, the following would be the most injurious, viz.:

"*First.* It would give to the city of New York about twenty-five thousand votes, while under the liberal extension of the right on the choice

of delegates to this convention, she has but about thirteen or fourteen thousand. The character of the increased number of votes would be such as would render their elections rather a curse than a blessing, which would drive from the polls all sober-minded people; and such, he was happy to find, was the united opinion, or nearly so, of the delegation from that city.

*“Secondly.* It would not only be injurious to them, but that injury would work an equally great one to the western and northern parts of the State. It was the present consolation of our hardy sons of the West that for their toils and their sufferings in reducing the wilderness to cultivation, they were cheered by the conviction, not only that they would be secure in the enjoyment of their dearly bought improvements, in consequence of their representation in the legislature, but that any increase of that representation gave them a still greater influence there. As far as it respected this State, their march and the march of empire kept pace. This arose from the circumstance of the representation in the State being founded on the number of electors, and because almost every man in a new county was an elector, under the existing and contemplated qualifications; while in the old counties, and especially in cities, there were great numbers who would not be embraced by them. So great was this effect that the city of New York alone would, under the vote of the other day, have become entitled to additional voters, over those who voted at the election of delegates, equal, or nearly so, to the whole number of votes of Ontario or Genesee. The direct consequence of which would be, that the additional representation of fourteen members, which are next year to be distributed among the counties, would, instead of going principally to the West, be surrendered to the worst population of the old counties and cities.

*“And Thirdly.* The door will be entirely closed against retreat, whatever might be our after-conviction, founded on experience, as to the evil tendency of this extended suffrage. The just equilibrium between the rights of those who have, and those who have no interest in the government, could, when once thus surrendered, never be regained, except by the sword.

Fancy the effect of this passage read aloud in that classic retreat of the Unterrified, known to the long-suffering sons of Manhattan by the name of the Pewter Mug!

Whether the course of events since these words were uttered has or has not demonstrated their wisdom, the same sons of Manhattan are competent to decide. The particular qualification proposed by Mr. Van Buren is one which the

world has outlived. The important question, which will become more pressing every year, is, whether there should be *any* qualification ; whether the suffrage system, which excludes all women, however wise, however taxed, and admits all men, however ignorant and irresponsible, is, or is not, one upon which this republic can achieve the bright career which lies, in possibility, before it.

In 1825, and the three years following, Mr. Van Buren reaped the reward of many labors and of much patient waiting. His hand was full of cards, and all his cards were trumps. He had achieved such a singularly advantageous position, that whatever happened, he was nearly sure to gain. One after another, the men who might have stood between him and the objects of ambition had been removed either by death or by age, or by the gratification, through his instrumentality, of their political desires. All but Clinton. Clinton was Governor again, and would be nothing but Governor or President. Mr. Van Buren was a Senator of the United States, and was elected to a second term in 1827, by a great majority. The sudden death of Governor Clinton, in 1828, removing from the scene the only man in New York that could be considered Mr. Van Buren's competitor, left him undisputed master of the situation. Indeed, the two men had ceased, for the time, to be rivals or opponents, for both had resolved upon supporting General Jackson for the presidency.

Along with Mr. Randolph, and the other strict constructionists in Congress, Mr. Van Buren had early taken sides against the administration of Mr. Adams, and maintained the attitude of opposition to the end. In his letter accepting the senatorship in 1827, he said : " It shall be my constant and zealous endeavor to protect the remaining rights reserved to the States by the federal constitution ; to restore those of which they have been divested by construction ; and to promote the interests and honor of our common country." Or, to use the language of Dr. Hammond, " Mr. Van Buren and his friends had put all their political capital at stake against

the Adams administration." And this involved the support of General Jackson in 1828 ; for there was no other man in the nation who had the remotest chance of carrying the day against the administration. True, General Jackson had gone all lengths for a protective tariff. True, General Jackson had voted for some of the odious internal improvements. Still, he was a Southern man ; and, perhaps, his opinions on the vexed questions were not as unchangeable as his will. In any case, there was no choice of men. Jackson, and Jackson only, could turn out Adams, and introduce a new dynasty, a new order of succession.\*

\* There was one difficulty in the way of Mr. Van Buren's support of General Jackson which we must briefly notice. The support of the General seemed to involve the necessity of electing Mr. Calhoun a second time to the vice-presidency, which would greatly enhance the prestige of his name. Mr. Calhoun was, moreover, the man abhorred of Crawford, Mr. Van Buren's some time political chief. A letter, published some years later, by Duff Green, in his *United States Telegraph*, and vouched for by him, explains with apparent truth, how this objection was removed :

"A party," says this writer, "of certain individuals in New York wished to run De Witt Clinton for Vice-President. Clinton opposed it on the ground that Calhoun and himself were of the same party, and nothing could be gained by it. The same individuals or party still pressed him to become a candidate on the Jackson ticket. Clinton still urged that the project was not advisable, and would be prejudicial to the party and his own fame. After much persuasion, he agreed that if Tennessee would nominate him, it would show that Jackson was in favor of it, and that New York might follow. Mr. Balch was made the instrument to sound General Jackson. Crawford was written to ; Balch gets the answer ; enclosed it to General Jackson, with a suggestion that Calhoun ought or might be dropped, and Clinton taken up. In a few days General Jackson called on Mr. Balch, and returned the letter of Crawford, stating to Mr. Balch that he at first felt like investigating the matter, but upon reflection concluded to leave it to time ; that he was sorry he had seen the letter ; that Calhoun had been his friend, to all appearances, for the last ten years, and he felt disposed to rely on him as such. He wished all political differences put to an end, and not to be revived, as no good could grow out of them. He was willing the country might settle these matters, and all such, as it had done. That he never deserted his friends, and could in no way connive at the proposal of taking up Clinton and putting down Calhoun ? That he thought highly of Clinton, and had no doubt but the country, at a proper time, would also do justice to Mr. Clinton. Thus spoke Jackson. Mr. Balch says, 'I immediately wrote to Mr. Van Buren an account of the interview. I was fully persuaded of the strong attachment of Gen-

The resolution of Mr. Van Buren to support General Jackson was formed as early, probably, as the year 1825, but he kept that resolution to himself, and enjoined the same reticence upon his confidants. Dr. Hammond discourses amusingly upon this feature of the campaign. "Never," he says, "was a political party in a better state of discipline than was the Van Buren or democratic party in New York during the years 1826, '27 and '28. A sense of common danger, which was entertained by the leaders of that party, probably had a great effect in inducing them to act in concert. A large majority of the party were opposed both to Mr. Adams and Mr. Clinton. They had no confidence either in the State or national executive. They wished to change both; but in order to effect that change, it was necessary so to conduct their political operations as to draw into their support a considerable portion of the friends of the governor, and especially of the democratic friends of Mr. Adams. I hazard little, with those who were at that day in active life, and knew the state of public feeling, in asserting that had the question been taken between Mr. Adams and General Jackson at any time during the first two years of the presidency of the former, a very large majority of the people would have declared for Mr. Adams. Hence, Mr. Van Buren and his friends enjoined most rigidly on all their adherents not to commit themselves on the presidential question. They averred that their sole object was to preserve the entire union of the democratic party, and that when that party at the proper time should announce its preference for either of the presidential candidates, they would in good faith endeavor to carry into effect its determination. The democratic newspapers (and especially the *Albany Argus*) were conducted with great skill and address in accordance with this scheme. So

eral Jackson to Calhoun. 'I therefore advised Van Buren to give up the idea of Clinton, and support Calhoun; for if they succeeded in electing Clinton Vice-President, that he felt assured that Jackson would make Calhoun Secretary of State, and Van Buren's prospects would be blasted forever.'"



rigidly were these injunctions of what has been called the Albany regency enforced, that several individuals, fascinated with the personal character of General Jackson, who openly declared their preference for him, were at least silently rebuked and partially put in political coventry by the same class of men who had themselves at that time fully determined that General Jackson was to be their candidate. These sagacious politicians foresaw that if at that early day the General was proclaimed as *the* democratic candidate, so formidable would the opposition then be that all expectations of success (and the expectation of success many times secures it) would be annihilated. Therefore it was that the regency preached and practiced the doctrine of non-commitalism.

“After the reelection of Mr. Van Buren to the United States Senate, more freedom was tolerated in the expression of opinions favorable to Jackson and adverse to Adams.

“Another circumstance which contributed to strengthen the Jackson party in New York was, that at the commencement of the administration of Mr. Monroe, General Jackson had written to him a letter in which he expressed an opinion, that inasmuch as the points of difference between the federal and republican parties had ceased to exist, the period had arrived when the national appointing power might select its officers from that class of citizens personally the most deserving, and who were best calculated to discharge their official duties for the public benefit. This sentiment was extremely agreeable to the federalists of this State, and highly lauded by them. From the year 1801 down to the present time, with the exception of some insignificant appointments made by Mr. Monroe and Mr. Adams, the federalists, as a party, had been, by the national executive, excluded from participation in the national patronage. Many federalists, judging from the sentiments contained in General Jackson’s letter to Mr. Monroe, entertained an opinion that if the former could be placed at the head of the general government, this

system which they denominated proscription, would be abolished."

It was not until late in 1827 that the democratic party was permitted to come out plainly for General Jackson. Then, all the Van Buren papers spoke in concert. "The effect," says Dr. Hammond, "was prodigious. All the machinery, the construction of which had for two years put in requisition the skill and ingenuity of Mr. Van Buren and his friends at Albany, was suddenly put in motion, and it performed to admiration."

When Congress met, Mr. Van Buren exerted his influence, and successfully exerted it, to secure the election to the Speakership of Mr. Andrew Stephenson of Virginia, a connection by marriage of his own family, and an opponent of the Adams administration. Ere long, Mr. Van Buren was announced as the Jackson candidate for the Governorship of New York. Observe his "cards." He was already a Senator of the United States. If defeated in the contest for the governorship, he was still a senator. And whether defeated or not, it was well "understood," that he was to be the Secretary of State in the administration of General Jackson.

That Mr. Van Buren was to hold this position in the cabinet of General Jackson was as well known to the chosen few at Albany in the summer of 1828, as it was to the public in the spring of 1829. So avers Dr. Hammond. I may add, that it was as well known to General Jackson in the summer of 1828, as it was in the spring of 1829. Precisely how, or where, or through whose agency, this "understanding" was effected, I can only guess. Senator Eaton of Tennessee, I think, could have given us the most exact information on this subject. He was the traveling member of the Jacksonian party in those years.

John Binns, in his blunt, straightforward way, relates a little incident, which is worth noting in this connection. "Soon after General Jackson's nomination (for the campaign of 1828), General Eaton, then the special confidant and political friend of General Jackson, and one with whom I had had

some previous personal intercourse, called on me, with the declaration that he was authorized by General Jackson to assure me that, 'if I would advocate the election of the General, when he was elected President, I should, if I thought well of it, remove to Washington City, become the editor and proprietor of the government newspaper, and do as much as I chose of the public printing ; or, if I did not wish to leave Philadelphia, as much of the public printing as I desired should be forwarded to Philadelphia for me to do, at the government prices.' I assured General Eaton that 'I was as grateful as any man could be for the distinguished services which General Jackson had rendered the United States, but that, after what I had written and published in relation to the General, I could not, from self-respect, give myself the lie direct, as I must do, if I were now to advocate his election.' "•

Perhaps, in the course of this journey, General Eaton gave Mr. Van Buren a call. Indeed, the two senators sat very near one another in the Senate Chamber, the lobbies of which afforded convenient nooks for confidential intercourse.

I do not believe that General Jackson "authorized" Eaton to make that corrupt offer to Mr. Binns. The truth is, that General Jackson gave up the conduct of the campaign to a few friends, of whom Senator Eaton was the traveling, and Major Lewis the home confederate. Precisely what was done by his friends in his name and for his cause, General Jackson knew and did not know. He must have winked occasionally. He developed a fine winking talent. He could also look away and not see what was going on.

The General, it appears, became conversant, during these years, with New York politics, and liked the strict military way in which the party was governed in that State. "I am no politician," he said one day to a young New Yorker, "but if I were a politician, I would be a New York politician."

• Recollections of the Life of John Binns, p. 253.

## CHAPTER XII.

## THE CAMPAIGN OF 1828.

THE friends of the administration were not alarmed. Mr. Clay himself was not. Mr. Adams, if less confident than his sanguine Secretary of State, expected a reelection. Mr. Webster, then on the most cordial terms with Henry Clay, and a pillar of the administration, felt sure of success as late as the spring of 1827. Mr. Webster, like most of the educated inhabitants of Boston, knew nothing of the people of the United States, and was generally wrong in his political prophecies.

To his friend, Jeremiah Mason, who was battling in New Hampshire with editor Isaac Hill, Mr. Webster, in April, 1827, expressed a deliberate confidence that the people would sustain the administration. "A survey of the whole ground," he wrote, "leads me to believe confidently in Mr. Adams' reelection. I set down New England, New Jersey, the greater part of Maryland, and, perhaps, all Delaware, Ohio, Kentucky, Indiana, Missouri, and Louisiana for him. We must then get votes enough in New York to choose him, and I think can not fail of this. It is possible we may lose four votes in Kentucky, but I do not expect it. At the same time it is not impossible that Pennsylvania may go for Mr. Adams."

So much for prophecy. But the acutest politicians are at fault when they predict the result of a popular election two years, two weeks, two days distant. Mr. Van Buren himself, we are assured by Dr. Hammond, was confident of a reelection in 1840.

The campaign of 1828 opened with a stunning flourish of trumpets. Louisiana, like New York, was a doubtful and troublesome State. Its scattering vote of 1824 it was highly desirable to concentrate in 1828; and it was resolved that

enthusiasm should effect in the southwest what management was accomplishing in New York. In 1827 the legislature of Louisiana, which had refused to recognize General Jackson's services in 1815, invited him to revisit New Orleans, and unite with them in the celebration of the eighth of January, 1828, on the scene of his great victory. General Jackson, who in 1804 would not call upon his friend Jefferson, lest he should seem to be a suitor for the governorship of Louisiana; General Jackson, who in 1824 declined to visit Boston, though assured that the visit would secure his election to the presidency; General Jackson, who in 1826 would not go to the Harrodsburg Springs, for fear the object of the journey should be misinterpreted, accepted the invitation of the legislature of Louisiana. His blood was up. He was resolute to win. Congress had been calling up the forgotten affair of the Six Militia men, and the case of John Woods, and the arrests at New Orleans. The Eighth of January should reply.

The reception of General Jackson at New Orleans on this occasion was, I presume, the most stupendous thing of the kind that had ever occurred in the United States, and has been surpassed since that day only by the reception of the orator Kossuth in the city of New York. Delegations from States as distant as New York were sent to New Orleans to swell the eclat of the demonstration. "The steamer *Courtland*," says an eye-witness, "with the committee appointed to meet the guest of Louisiana, left New Orleans on the twenty-eighth of December. It was pleasing to observe, as we proceeded on our way, that the enthusiasm kindled in the city was felt intensely in distant parts of the State. In Concordia, as well as in the city of New Orleans, the people knew their deliverer; every heart palpitated at the sound of his name, and the anticipation of his arrival. We reached Natchez on the first of January, an auspicious day, and pregnant with glorious remembrances. That city was filled with a vast multitude, impatiently waiting for our guest. On the morning of the fourth, the day he had fixed for reaching

Natchez, the heights on the river were filled with spectators; all eyes were turned upon the stream in breathless expectation. At last a white smoke, curling like a mist over the tops of the cypress trees, proclaimed the approach of the *Pocahontas*. The surrounding hills rang with loud huzzas, greeting their arrival. A procession along the picturesque margin of the river; a dinner, at which ardent devotion was guided and tempered by decorum and politeness, and a ball, at which the beauty of Mississippi was exhibited with all that taste could add to natural charms and native grace; the enthusiasm of the whole population, the shouts of the multitude, proclaimed that Louisiana and Mississippi were united by ennobling sympathies.

“ At twelve o’clock at night, General Jackson reëmbarked in the *Pocahontas*; some hours afterward, the committee of Louisiana followed in the *Courtland*; and then both boats, united together, descended the stream, checking occasionally their velocity, as it was intended to reach New Orleans on the eighth.

“ At last the morning of the auspicious day dawned upon New Orleans. A thick mist covered the water and the land, and at ten o’clock began to rise into clouds; and when the sun at last appeared, it served only to show the darkness of the horizon, threatening a storm in the north. It was at that moment the city became visible, with its steeples and the forest of masts rising from the waters. At that instant, too, a fleet of steamboats was seen advancing toward the *Pocahontas*, which had now got under way, with twenty-four flags waving over her lofty decks. Two stupendous boats, lashed together, led the van. The whole fleet kept up a constant fire of artillery, which was answered from several ships in the harbor and from the shore. General Jackson stood on the back gallery of the *Pocahontas*, his head uncovered, conspicuous to the whole multitude, which literally covered the steamboats, the shipping, and the surrounding shores. The van which bore the revolutionary soldiers and the remnant of the old Orleans battalion passed the *Pocahontas*,

and, rounding to, fell down the stream, while acclamations of thousands of spectators rang from the river to the woods, and back to the river.

“In this order the fleet, consisting of eighteen steamboats of the first class, passed close to the city, directing their course toward the field of battle. When it was first descried, some horsemen only, the marshals of the day, had reached the ground. But in a few minutes it seemed alive with a vast multitude, brought thither on horseback and in carriages, and poured forth from the steamboats. A line was formed by Generals Planché and Labaltat, and the committee repaired on board the *Pocahontas*, in order to invite the General to land and meet his brother-soldiers and fellow-citizens. I have no words to describe the scene which ensued.”

The rest can be imagined—the landing at the levee of the city, the procession, the banquet, the scenes at the theater. “Mrs. Jackson,” adds the chronicler, “who, with several ladies from Tennessee, accompanied her husband, was met and waited upon, the moment she landed from the *Pocahontas*, by Mrs. Marigny and other respectable ladies, who, after having congratulated her on her safe arrival, conducted her to Mr. Marigny’s house, where refreshments had been prepared, and where she received the salutations of a large and brilliant circle.” The festivities continued four days, at the expiration of which the General and his friends reëmbarked on board the *Pocahontas*, and returned homeward.

The campaign now set in with its usual severity. During the rest of the year, the country rang with the names of JACKSON AND CALHOUN, ADAMS AND RUSH. The contest, during this final year, became one of personalities chiefly. Against Mr. Adams, every possible charge was rung upon Bargain and Corruption. He was accused of federalism, of haughtiness, of selfishness, of extravagant expenditures, and, O, crime of crimes ! of polluting the White House, that sacred abode of purity and wisdom, with a billiard table ! Mr. Adams’ son and secretary had actually bought, out of his allowance, a billiard table, and set it up in an apartment of the presiden-

tial mansion. Mr. Adams was further accused of being a Unitarian ; upon which a statement appeared in the papers, declaring that the President attended and was a trustee of a Presbyterian Church, to which he had contributed eighteen hundred dollars. It was charged against him, that the East Room, in which his excellent mother had hung clothes to dry, was now furnished with such appalling extravagance, that country members were quite overcome at the spectacle ; and could only relieve their minds by quoting Cicero against Catiline—O tempora, O mores !

General Jackson was accused of every crime, offense, and impropriety that man was ever known to be guilty of. His whole life was subject to the severest scrutiny. Every one of his duels, fights, and quarrels was narrated at length. His connection with Aaron Burr was, of course, a favorite theme. The eleven military executions which he had ordered, beginning with John Woods and ending with Arbuthnot and Ambriester, were all recounted. John Binns, of Philadelphia, issued a series of hand bills, each bearing the outline of a coffin-lid, upon which was printed an inscription recording the death of one of these victims. Campaign papers were first started this year. One entitled, *We the People*, and another, called the *Anti-Jackson Expositor*, were particularly prominent. The conduct of General Jackson in Florida during his governorship of that Territory was detailed. The peculiar circumstances of his marriage, long forgotten, were paraded with the grossest exaggerations, to the sore grief of good Mrs. Jackson, and to the General's unspeakable wrath. The mother, too, of General Jackson was not permitted to rest quietly in her grave. Mrs. Jackson once found her husband in tears. Pointing to a paragraph reflecting on his mother, he said, " Myself I can defend ; you I can defend ; but now they have assailed even the memory of my mother."

To refute the charges against the General, the famous Tennessee " White-washing Committee" was called into existence. Major William B. Lewis suggested the measure, and was one of the most laborious members of the committee.



He has also favored the readers of these pages with a brief account of its origin and transactions. "The flood-gates of abuse," writes Major Lewis, "were not only opened upon him, but the most infamous slanders were published in the administration papers against his wife, one of the most benevolent and pious of women. With a view of defending the characters of both against the attacks of his enemies, his friends at Nashville saw the necessity of taking immediate steps; and a public meeting of the citizens was, therefore, called (at my instance) for the purpose of taking into consideration the best method of accomplishing this object. At this meeting the following preamble and resolutions were adopted :

" ' This meeting believes the present to be a conjuncture, when every honest and just exertion should be employed to promote the election of that great and honest man, Andrew Jackson, to the presidency of the United States, and that to make those exertions most efficient, a committee should be organized, whose duty it will be to frame and publish an address to the people of the United States, such as may be best adapted to effectuate the great object in view, and whose further duty it will be, as occasion may require, and so far as within their power, ' to detect and arrest falsehood and calumny, by the publication of truth, and by furnishing either to the public or to individuals, whether alone or associated, full and correct information upon any matter or subject within their knowledge or power,' properly connected with the fitness or qualification of Andrew Jackson to fill the office of President of the United States.

" ' *Resolved, therefore,* That John Overton, Robert C. Foster, George W. Campbell, William L. Brown, John Catron, Robert Whyte, Thomas Claiborne, Joseph Philips, Daniel Graham, William B. Lewis, Jesse Wharton, Edward Ward, Alfred Balch, Felix Robertson, John Shelby, Josiah Nichol, William White, and John McNairy, be selected to compose the committee.'

" ' This committee was composed of some of the ablest and most distinguished citizens of the State, whose duty it was, as stated above, to vindicate the reputation of General Jackson against the malignant attacks and foul calumnies of his enemies. With the character and standing of most of these gentlemen you are well acquainted. I will remark,

however, that John Overton, the chairman, George W. Campbell, W. L. Brown, Robert White, and John Catron, had all occupied seats upon the bench of the Court of Appeals, the highest court in the State, and the last named is now one of the Justices of the Supreme Court of the United States. So well and so efficiently did this committee discharge its duty to the General and the country, that it soon received from the enemies of General Jackson the cognomen of the 'White-washing Committee.' It successfully and triumphantly defended his character against the charges of inhumanity and a blood-thirsty disposition, in having had six militia men shot, during the last war with England, for desertion, and of being concerned with Col. Burr in his designs against the United States. Nor was it less successful in defending the reputation of Mrs. Jackson against the attacks upon her by those demons in human shape.

"One of the newspapers which took the lead in these infamous attacks upon the reputation of Mrs. Jackson was the *National Journal*, published in Washington, which was said to be the especial organ of President Adams himself. So well satisfied of this was General Jackson, at least, that he refused to call on Mr. Adams (as it was thought in courtesy he should have done) when he reached Washington in February, 1829. He thought that a man who would permit a public journal, which was under his control, to assail the reputation of any respectable female, much less the wife of his rival and competitor for the first office in the world, was not entitled to the respect of any honorable man, and he would not, therefore, go near him. This was the reason why he did not call upon him, and not from a want of magnanimity or sense of what was due to the chief magistrate of the nation, as it was alleged by his enemies at the time."

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to him, that he himself did over the Jackson papers of Tennessee.

Major Lewis does not allude to his own labors as a member of the committee. To him was assigned the congenial task of defending his friend, Mrs. Jackson. He traveled to the lower country in search of evidence, and devoted half the year to this one object ; collecting an amount of testimony in support of Judge Overton's statement (previously given in these pages) that gave it general belief. Mrs. Jackson testified, in the strongest terms, her gratitude to Major Lewis for this great service.

With regard to the other labors of the White-washing Committee, they doubtless had their effect. But there was a paragraph of two or three lines, which was set afloat in the Jackson newspapers in the course of the summer, that probably did as much as all their publications, to remove the impression made upon the average voter by the case of the six militia men and the executions in Florida. This was the paragraph :

“COOL AND DELIBERATE MURDER.—Jackson coolly and deliberately put to death upward of fifteen hundred British troops on the 8th of January, 1815, on the plains below New Orleans, for no other offense than that they wished to sup in the city that night.”

This was a crushing and blinding argument. For those who could not read it, there was another, which was legible to the most benighted intellect. In every village, as well as upon the corners of many city streets, was erected a Hickory Pole. Many of these poles were standing as late as 1845, rotten momentoes of the delirium of 1828.

One feature of this campaign may remind some readers of recent presidential elections. Threats of a certain character were used to intimidate northern voters ; or, rather, such threats were *said* to have been uttered. The following paragraph from the *New York American* reads more like 1860 than 1828 ; but it appeared in July of the latter year :

“JACKSONISM.—It is distinctly charged upon Mr. Senator Rowan of Kentucky, that he has declared, *if Mr. Adams be reëlected President, the*

*next Congress will be the last that will ever sit in the United States.* The last *Richmond Whig* imputes to Mr. Speaker Stevenson, a sentiment nearly similar, expressed publicly, in these words—‘*that if General Jackson was not elected, the Union would be dissolved.*’ The same Virginia journal quotes as the opinion ‘of a Judge of the General Court of Virginia, at Norfolk,’ that ‘*if Mr. Adams was not put out by the voice of the people, they would be willing to put him out by force.*’ When to these sentiments of grave senators and judges, are added the inflammatory resolutions and proceedings of certain districts in South Carolina, the open invitations to a separation of the Union contained in some Jackson journals of that State—and when it is found that in every instance these sentiments are indulged, this most flagitious tone is held by partisans of General Jackson, and by them only, can it be unfair, unreasonable, or unjust, to impute the doctrines thus broached, as the doctrines of the party?”

The same paper published the only editorial article that I have found which condemned General Jackson on the ground that he was a slave-holder. It was common then to speak of General Jackson as the “Farmer of Tennessee,” but the editor of the *American* objected to the phrase. “Let us see,” he remarked, “what is the Farmer of Tennessee? Possessing a fine and extensive domain with a vast mansion, not a farmhouse, but *The Hermitage*, surrounded by a host of slaves—this farmer of Tennessee eats the bread of idleness and luxury. The whip of the overseer quickens the servile labors whereby he—one of those privileged beings, born to consume the fruits of the earth, is sustained—and men, immortal as himself, are daily ‘driven a field,’ like oxen; and their strength taxed to the uttermost, perhaps, that he, their master, may add another race-horse to his stud, or stake an additional bet upon a favorite game-cock. Of personal labor, the hands of this ‘farmer,’ are innocent; for, where slavery exists, labor is held to degrade the white man.”

This article, however, was exceptional. The dread subject entered not directly into the contest. The dividing questions between north and south were questions relating to the tariff.

This was a busy summer with the politicians, minor and major. Isaac Hill, editor of the *New Hampshire Patriot*,



was doing zealous battle for Jackson and Calhoun in a State that had not yet become democratic. He was a sore thorn in the side of Ezekiel Webster and Jeremiah Mason during this year of fury. If one Nicholas Biddle could have looked a year or two into the future, he would have thought a million dollars a moderate price for the head of Isaac Hill; for it was Isaac who dropped the spark, that lighted the match, that fired the train, that exploded the magazine, that blew up a BANK in which Mr. Biddle had a considerable interest.

Two other gentlemen, then unknown to fame, were extremely active this summer. They were citizens of Kentucky, and one of them was the editor of a newspaper. Both had been near friends and warm partisans of Henry Clay. One was a relative of Mr. Clay, and the other had been a tutor in his family. But both were now striving, with all their might and all their ingenuity, in behalf of General Jackson—organizing the very militia companies into electioneering clubs. One of these gentlemen was named Amos Kendall; the other, Francis P. Blair.

At Washington, General Duff Green was publishing his *United States Telegraph*, the central organ of the Jacksonians. At New York, Colonel James Watson Webb, the editor of the *Courier*, was doing great service on the same side. The *New York Courier and Inquirer* was, for twenty years, the first newspaper on the western continent. It was the paper that gave the impulse to the press of New York which has led to its present development. Associated with Colonel Webb, at that time, was an individual who has since become better known to the people of Manhattan—James Gordon Bennett.\*

\* The following is a specimen of Mr. Bennett's electioneering paragraphs of this period:—"The impotency of the attacks which have been made upon General Jackson during the last three years, by the Adams party, reminds us of an anecdote: 'Mother,' bawled out a great two-fisted girl one day, 'my toe itches!' 'Well, scratch it then.' 'I have, but it wont *stay* scratched!'

"'Mr. Clay, Mr. Clay,' cries out two-fisted Uncle Toby, 'Jackson's a coming—Jackson's a-coming!' 'Well, then,' says Clay, 'anti-tariff him in the *Journal*!' 'I have, but he wont *stay* anti-tariffed.' 'Mr. Clay, Mr. Clay,' bawls out Alder-

Mr. Ingham, too, made himself conspicuous as the pamphleteer and manager-general of the Jackson party in Pennsylvania. Major Eaton continued to be the same party's circulating medium.

And there was yet another personage who was zealous for General Jackson's election : namely, Aaron Burr. In what way Colonel Burr contributed to the cause, I can not say. But persons who lived with him at the time, represent him to have been secretly but actively engaged in electioneering for General Jackson. Mysterious messengers came and went. Noted Jackson men, and some of the *most* noted, were closeted long and often with the little silent old man, in his back office ; "from nine in the morning till dark," says one gentleman, who was then an apprentice of Burr. Then, there was a gentleman who made journeys to Virginia, whose expenses were paid by Burr, and whose business was supposed to be to unite certain factions in Virginia in the support of Jackson. But all this is too vague and unimportant for more than mention. It rests on the gossip of law-clerks and office-boys. But when we consider that several of the conspicuous supporters of General Jackson in this vicinity were members of the Burrite faction of 1800, and that others remained Burr's friends to the day of his death, and assisted to bear his body to the grave, it is reasonable to conclude that Burr contributed advice and suggestion, at least, to the General's cause in 1828.

Congress adjourned May 26. Members who had spent man Binns, 'the old farmer's a-coming, a-coming.' 'Well, then,' says Harry, 'coffin-hand-bill him.' 'I have,' says Binns, 'but he wont stay coffin-hand-billed.' 'Mr. Adams, Mr Adams,' says John H. Pleasants, 'the hero's coming, actually coming.' 'Well, then,' says Mr. Adams, 'Burr him, and traitor him.' 'I have, but he wont stay Burred or traitored.' 'Mr. Clay, Mr. Clay,' says Charles Hammond, 'Jackson is coming.' 'Well,' says Clay, 'prove him an adulterer and a negro-trader.' 'I have,' says Charles, 'but he wont stay an adulterer or a negro-trader.' 'Mr. Clay, Mr. Clay,' bawls out the full Adams slandering chorus, 'we have called Jackson a murderer, an adulterer, a traitor, an ignorant, a fool, a crook-back, a pretender, and so forth ; but he wont *stay* any of these names.' 'He wont,' says Mr. Clay ; 'why, then, I shan't *stay* at Washington, that's all !'

the winter and spring in electioneering at Washington were anxious to continue their labors among the people, on the stump. One incident of congressional electioneering is too curious, too well authenticated, too instructive, too shameful, to be passed by in silence here. Colonel Thomas H. Benton, then a member of the Senate, relates it in a note to one of the volumes of his Abridgment of the Debates, confessing that he took part in the proceeding. The State of Ohio desired an appropriation of half a million acres of public land in aid of the Scioto Canal. Ohio, with regard to the coming election, was set down by both parties as a doubtful State—a State yet to be won or lost. Let Colonel Benton tell the rest :

“The presidential election depending, and the friends of the two candidates both anxious to gain the vote of Ohio for their favorite, conceived the same idea about the same time, namely, that a liberal grant of land to the State would be a help to the candidate whose supporters obtained it. So, both parties (members from Ohio, of course,) moved in the business, each bringing in a separate bill, and each for the full amount of land expected. But the friends of Jackson were a little the quickest, and got in their bill first, and secured it the first consideration in the committee of the whole, where it was agreed to ; and then, being ahead and sanctioned in the committee, its passage was considered to be a matter of course when reported in the house. But here ‘that most extraordinary accident’ (as it was facetiously termed in debate) happened. The bill which had been before got behind. The one below it on the calendar got above it in the file ; and, being taken up first, was passed before the ‘accident’ was discovered. This was fatal to the other bill—‘death and destruction to it,’ as one of its friends declared ; it being impossible to expect two bills, for two grants of land to one State, to pass at the same time.

“And so was the event. The bill of the Jackson party, coming on after the other had passed, was rejected, and remained so—a reconsideration having been refused. Then the

friends of the lost bill ran up to the Senate, told what had happened, and appealed to their friends there to checkmate the move, by getting the lost bill added to the other as an amendment when it came up for concurrence. This was done ; and the same bill being agreed to in the house as an amendment which had been rejected as a bill, the State of Ohio received the two grants, when neither party hoped for more than one in the beginning.

“ Such was, and such may be, national legislation in high party times ; great public measures ostensibly decided as meritorious, and sinistrously passed or rejected upon a party calculation !”\*

The most real issue in the presidential contest of 1828 was one which was not stated at the time, nor generally perceived. The question was, whether “ universal suffrage,” so called, was to have any practical effect in the United States. Down to this period in the history of the republic, the educated few had kept themselves uppermost. Cabinets, congresses, legislatures, governors, mayors, had usually been chosen from the same class of society as that from which the governing men of Europe are chosen. Public life was supposed to require an apprenticeship, as much as any private profession. In short, the ruling class in the United States, as in all other countries, was chiefly composed of men who had graduated at colleges, and had passed the greater part of their lives on carpets.

The educated class were not equal to the duty assigned them—that of instructing and guiding their less fortunate countrymen. They were not then equal to it, and they are not now. Jefferson accepted his share of this great trust, and worthily strove to perform his share of this great duty. His life is but a catalogue of benefactions to the people. But among American citizens of his social eminence, how many were there, how many are there, with understanding enough to comprehend, with magnanimity enough to live up to the

\* Abridgment, vol. x., p. 197.

height of the great sentiment which breathed all the life into this republic that it has ever possessed? How have this class hugged their gentilities, genealogies, conservatisms, and all the other antiquated and effeminating nonsense, of which Europe itself is beginning to be ashamed, and is preparing to cast off as a tawdry and ragged old cloak!

The truly helpful men and women of this republic have oftenest sprung from the cabin, and learned to read by the light of pine-knots, and worked their way up to their rightful places as leaders of the people, by the strength of their own arm, brain, and resolution.

The scepter was about to be wrested from the hands of those who had not shown themselves worthy to hold it. When they felt it going, however, they made a vigorous clutch, and lost it only after a desperate struggle. In these Jacksonian contests, therefore, we find nearly all the talent, nearly all the learning, nearly all the ancient wealth, nearly all the business activity, nearly all the book-nourished intelligence, nearly all the silver-forked civilization of the country, united in opposition to General Jackson, who represented the country's untutored instincts.

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## CHAPTER XIII.

### RESULT OF THE ELECTION.

THE number of electoral votes in 1828 was two hundred and sixty-one. One hundred and thirty-one was a majority. General Jackson received one hundred and seventy-eight; Mr. Adams, eighty-three.

With the exception of one electoral district in Maine, Messrs. Adams and Rush received the entire vote of New England; New Hampshire itself, despite the exertions of Isaac Hill, voting for them.

Of the thirty-six electoral votes cast by the State of New

York, Adams and Rush obtained sixteen ; Jackson and Calhoun, twenty.

New Jersey voted entire for Adams and Rush ; so did Delaware. In Maryland, the same candidates obtained a bare majority—six votes to Jackson's five. In Georgia, Mr. Crawford had still influence enough to withdraw seven votes out of nine from Mr. Calhoun, and throw them away upon William Smith, of South Carolina. The entire vote of Georgia, however, was given to General Jackson, Mr. Crawford more than consenting thereto.

Every other State in the Union—Pennsylvania, Virginia, both Carolinas, Kentucky, Ohio, Tennessee, Indiana, Louisiana, Alabama, Mississippi, Missouri, Illinois—gave an undivided vote for Jackson and Calhoun. For the vice-presidency Mr. Calhoun received one hundred and seventy-one votes, out of two hundred and sixty-one. There were no scattering or wasted votes except the seven cast for William Smith in Georgia.

In all Tennessee, Adams and Rush obtained less than three thousand votes. In many towns, every vote was cast for Jackson and Calhoun. A distinguished member of the North Carolina legislature told me that he happened to enter a Tennessee village in the evening of the last day of the presidential election of 1828. He found the whole male population out hunting ; the objects of the chase being two of their fellow-citizens. He inquired by what crime these men had rendered themselves so obnoxious to their neighbors, and was informed that they had voted against General Jackson. The village, it appeared, had set its heart upon sending up a unanimous vote for the General, and these two voters had frustrated its desire. As the day wore on, the whisky flowed more and more freely, and the result was a universal chase after the two voters, with a view to tarring and feathering them. They fled to the woods, however, and were not taken.\*

\* There was a respectable opposition to General Jackson in some parts of Tennessee—respectable in every particular except numbers.

On the day (Nov. 10th) on which the result of the election began to be considered certain in New York, the evening papers announced that General William Henry Harrison, of Ohio, appointed Minister to Colombia, was going on board the United States ship *Erie*, under the usual salute. He went to sea that afternoon. He might as well have brought his trunk ashore, and quietly gone back to Ohio.

It was not in Tennessee only that the opponents of the victorious party were threatened with violence. Alderman Binns, of Philadelphia, the author of the "Coffin Hand Bills," tells a story in point. "As soon," he says, "as the result of the election was known, a rumor ran through the multitude that it would be well if they were to mob the office of the *Democratic Press*. This proposition was soon improved upon by another, to wit: that to punish the editor appropriately for his coffin hand-bills, an empty coffin should be forthwith procured, and taken with them, in order to put the editor of the *Press* into it and carry him round the town. The first thing I did on receiving the above very unwelcome information was to lock and put the wooden bar across the publishing office door, on Chestnut Street, and bolt it. I then made fast the front door, the outside window-shutters on the second floor, and the back door, and a door which opened into the alley. All this had not been long accomplished before 'the stormy wave of the multitude' was heard approaching. My faithful wife accompanied me, carrying the light, and giving what aid she could. We went quietly up stairs into the front garret, taking our children and the girls with us. The mob, the night being dark, had many lights of various kinds and colors, and shouted vociferously. We were as still as mice. My wife and I then went on the roof of the house, and peeping over the edge of the copping-stone, I saw at the front door the coffin, without a lid, in which it was proposed to carry me round the city, and land me, or water me, I knew not where. Having ascertained that they could not force the doors, the more violent among the mob threw stones at them and at the window-shutters, many of

which they split. Some idea of the yelling of this mob may be imagined when I inform the reader that Chestnut Street, from Second to Third Streets, with all its alleys, was crowded with angry, noisy people. After two or three hours' screaming and screeching, the rioters slunk away in squads, taking with them the coffin and whatsoever else they had brought. There was a meeting of some of my personal friends the next morning, and it was determined that myself and family should for a night or two leave the house, and sleep in the houses of some friends. The next night, some thirty or more friends took possession of my house, which was supplied with food and all things necessary for their comfort, and for the defense of the house and office. The street at night was again filled with a noisy mob for several hours, after which they slunk away. The family returned, after three nights' absence, and we heard no more of the baffled besiegers."

The news of General Jackson's election to the presidency, I am informed by Major Lewis, created no great sensation at the Hermitage, so certain beforehand were its inmates of a result in accordance with their desires. Mrs. Jackson quietly said :

" Well, for Mr. Jackson's sake, I am glad ; for my own part, I never wished it."

The people of Nashville, greatly elated by the success of their General, resolved to celebrate it in the way in which they had long been accustomed to celebrate every important event in his career. A banquet unparalleled should be consumed in honor of his last triumph. The day appointed for this affair was the twenty-third of December, the anniversary of the Night Battle below New Orleans. General Jackson accepted the invitation to be present.

Certain ladies of Nashville, meanwhile, were secretly preparing for Mrs. Jackson a magnificent wardrobe, suitable, as they thought, for the adornment of her person when, as mistress of the White House, she would be deemed the first lady in the nation.



## CHAPTER XIV.

## DEATH AT THE HERMITAGE.

FOR four or five years the health of Mrs. Jackson had been precarious. She had complained, occasionally, of an uneasy feeling about the region of the heart ; and, during the late excitements, she had been subject to sharper pains and palpitation. The aspersions upon her character had wounded deeply her feelings and her pride. She was frequently found in tears. Long esteemed as the kindest and most motherly of women, she had of late years been revered by a circle of religious ladies as their chief, their guide, their ornament. That her name should be ruthlessly dragged into the public prints ; that she, a faithful wife of thirty-seven years, should be held up to the contempt of the whole country as an adulteress, was more than she could endure. It aggravated her disease ; it shortened her life. Perhaps, if the truth were known, it would be found that she is not the only female victim of our indecent party contentions.

I learned the story of her death from good "Old Hannah," the faithful servant in whose arms she breathed her last.

It was a Wednesday morning, December 17. All was going on as usual at the Hermitage. The General was in the fields, at some distance from the house, and Mrs. Jackson, apparently in tolerable health, was occupied in her household duties. Old Hannah asked her to come into the kitchen to give her opinion upon some article of food that was in course of preparation. She performed the duty required of her, and returned to her usual sitting-room, followed by Hannah. Suddenly, she uttered a horrible shriek, placed her hands upon her heart, sunk into a chair, struggling for breath, and fell forward into Hannah's arms. There were only servants in the house ; many of whom ran frantically in, uttering the loud lamentations with which Africans are wont to give vent to their feelings. The stricken lady was placed upon her bed,

and while messengers hurried away for assistance, Hannah employed the only remedy she knew to relieve the anguish of her mistress, "I rubbed her side," said the plain-spoken Hannah, "till it was black and blue."

No relief. She writhed in agony. She fought for breath. The General came in alarmed beyond description. The doctor arrived. Mrs. A. J. Donelson hurried in from her house near by. The Hermitage was soon filled with near relatives, friends, and servants. With short intervals of partial relief, Mrs. Jackson continued to suffer all that a woman could suffer, for the space of sixty hours; during which her husband never left her bed-side for ten minutes. On Friday evening she was much better; was almost free from pain; and breathed with far less difficulty. The first use, and, indeed, the only use she made of her recovered speech was, to protest to the General that she was quite well, and to implore him to go to another room and sleep, and by no means to allow her indisposition to prevent his attending the banquet on the 23d. She told him that the day of the banquet would be a very fatiguing one, and he must not permit his strength to be reduced by want of sleep.

Still, the General would not leave her. He distrusted this sudden relief. He feared it was the relief of torpor or exhaustion; and the more, as the remedies prescribed by Dr. Hogg, the attending physician, had not produced their designed effect. Saturday and Sunday passed, and still she lay free from serious pain, but weak and listless; the General still her watchful, constant, almost sleepless attendant.

On Monday evening, the evening before the 23d, her disease appeared to take a decided turn for the better; and she then so earnestly entreated the General to prepare for the fatigues of the morrow by having a night of undisturbed sleep, that he consented, at last, to go into an adjoining room and lie down upon a sofa. The doctor was still in the house. Hannah and George were to sit up with their mistress.

At 9 o'clock, the General bade her good night, went into the next room, and took off his coat, preparatory to lying

down. He had been gone about five minutes ; Mrs. Jackson was then, for the first time, removed from her bed, that it might be rearranged for the night. While sitting in a chair supported in the arms of Hannah, she uttered a long, loud, inarticulate cry ; which was immediately followed by a rattling noise in the throat. Her head fell forward upon Hannah's shoulder. She never spoke nor breathed again.

There was a wild rush into the room of husband, doctor, relatives, friends, and servants. The General assisted to lay her upon the bed. "Bleed her," he cried. No blood flowed from her arm. "Try the temple, Doctor." Two drops stained her cap, but no more followed.

It was long before he would believe her dead. He looked eagerly into her face, as if still expecting to see signs of returning life. Her hands and feet grew cold. There could be no doubt then, and they prepared a table for laying her out. With a choking voice, the General said :

"Spread four blankets upon it. If she does come to, she will lie so hard upon the table."

He sat all night long in the room by her side, with his face in his hands, "grieving," said Hannah, and occasionally looking into the face, and feeling the heart and pulse of the form so dear to him. Major Lewis, who had been immediately sent for, arrived just before daylight, and found him still there, nearly speechless and wholly inconsolable. He sat in the room nearly all the next day, the picture of despair. It was only with great difficulty that he was persuaded to take a little coffee.

"And this was the way," concluded Hannah, "that old mistus died ; and we always say, that when we lost her, we lost a mistus and a mother, too : and more a mother than a mistus. And we say the same of old master ; for he was more a father to us than a master, and many's the time we've wished him back again, to help us out of our troubles."

The sad news reached Nashville early on the morning of the 23d, when already the committee of arrangements were busied with the preparations for the General's reception.

"The table was well nigh spread," said one of the papers, "at which all was expected to be hilarity and joy, and our citizens had sallied forth on the morning with spirits light and buoyant, and countenances glowing with animation and hope, when suddenly the scene is changed : congratulations are turned into expressions of condolence, tears are substituted for smiles, and sincere and general mourning pervades the community." In the course of the morning the following announcement was published :

"The committee appointed by the citizens of Nashville to superintend the reception of General Jackson on this day, with feelings of deep regret announce to the public that Mrs. Jackson departed this life last night, between the hours of 10 and 11 o'clock.

"Respect for the memory of the deceased, and a sincere condolence with him on whom this providential affliction has fallen, forbid the manifestation of public regard intended for the day.

"In the further consideration of the painful and unexpected occasion which has brought them together, the committee feel that it is due to the exemplary virtues and exalted character of the deceased, that some public token should be given of the high regard entertained toward her while living. They have therefore resolved—

"That it be respectfully recommended to their fellow-citizens of Nashville, in evidence of this feeling, to refrain on to-morrow from the ordinary pursuits of life."

To which the mayor, Dr. Felix Robertson. added a resolution of the board of aldermen :

"The committee on behalf of the citizens having determined that it is proper to abstain from business on to-morrow, therefore,

"*Resolved*, That the inhabitants of Nashville are respectfully invited to abstain from their ordinary business on to-morrow, as a mark of respect for the memory of Mrs. Jackson, and that the church bells be tolled from 1 until 2 o'clock—being the hour of her funeral."

On the day of the funeral, every vehicle in Nashville was employed in conveying its inhabitants to the Hermitage. The grounds about the mansion were crowded with people. "Such a scene," wrote an eye-witness, "I never wish to witness again. The poor old gentleman was supported to the grave

by General Coffee and Major Rutledge. I never pitied any person more in my life. The road to the Hermitage was almost impassable, and an immense number of persons attended the funeral. The remains were interred in the lower part of the garden. I never before saw so much affliction among servants on the death of a mistress. Some seemed completely stupified by the event; others wrung their hands and shrieked aloud. The woman who had waited on Mrs. Jackson had to be carried off the ground. After the funeral the old gentleman came up to me, took my hand, and shook it. Some of the gentlemen mentioned my name. He again caught my hand, and squeezed it three times, but all he could utter was, 'Philadelphia.' I never shall forget his look of grief."

The papers of Tennessee, without distinction of party, joined in commemorating the virtues of the deceased. "Her pure and gentle heart," said the *Republican*, "in which a selfish, guileful, or malicious thought never found entrance, was the throne of benevolence; and under its noble influence her faculties and time were constantly devoted to the exercise of hospitality, and to acts of kindness. To feed the hungry, to clothe the naked, to supply the indigent, to raise the humble, to notice the friendless, and to comfort the unfortunate, were her favorite occupations; nor could the kindness of her soul be repressed by distress or prosperity; but like those fountains which, rising in deep and secluded valleys, flow on in the frost of winter and through summer's heat, it maintained a uniform and refreshing current. Thus she lived; and when death approached, her patience and resignation were equal to her goodness; not an impatient gesture, not a vexatious look, not a fretful accent escaped her; but her last breath was charged with an expression of tenderness for the man whom she loved more than her life, and honored next to her God."

The remains of Mrs. Jackson still lie in the corner of the Hermitage garden, next those of her husband, in a tomb prepared by him in these years for their reception. It resem-

bles, in appearance, an open summer-house—a small, white dome supported by pillars of white marble. The tablet that covers the remains of Mrs. Jackson reads as follows:

“Here lie the remains of Mrs. Rachel Jackson, wife of President Jackson, who died the 22d of December, 1828, aged 61. Her face was fair; her person pleasing, her temper amiable, her heart kind; she delighted in relieving the wants of her fellow-creatures, and cultivated that divine pleasure by the most liberal and unpretending methods; to the poor she was a benefactor; to the rich an example; to the wretched a comforter; to the prosperous an ornament: her piety went hand in hand with her benevolence, and she thanked her Creator for being permitted to do good. A being so gentle and so virtuous, slander might wound but could not dishonor. Even death, when he tore her from the arms of her husband, could but transport her to the bosom of her God.”

General Jackson never recovered from the shock of his wife's death. He was never quite the same man afterward. It subdued his spirit and corrected his speech. Except on occasions of extreme excitement, few and far between, he never again used what is commonly called “profane language;” not even the familiar phrase, “By the Eternal.” There were times, of course, when his fiery passions asserted themselves; when he uttered wrathful words; when he wished even to throw off the robes of office, as he once said, that he might call his enemies to a dear account. But these were rare occurrences. He mourned deeply and ceaselessly the loss of his truest friend, and was often guided, in his domestic affairs, by what he supposed would have been her will if she had been there to make it known.

Before resuming the course of events which this bereavement interrupted, I will extract a few passages from a letter written for the readers of these pages by a lady who, when a little girl less than nine years of age, witnessed in Nashville many of the scenes attending the death of Mrs. Jackson and the departure of the President-elect for the seat of government. She was the daughter of an officer of General Jackson's division, and became the wife of another officer whose commission, as she remarks, bears “Old Hickory's signature.”

“My personal knowledge,” writes this obliging and gifted lady, “of the General and Mrs. Jackson dates back to the time when I was not yet nine years old, the summer preceding his first election ; and my impressions are, of course, those of a child ; but, perhaps, none the less correct on that account. Being honest and unprejudiced, they may avail as much, as far as they go, as if I had been much older. What I write, you may depend upon as truthful, although there may not be much of it.

“At the time to which I refer, my father, then a captain in the United States Army, was stationed at Nashville, on the recruiting service. His family was with him, and we boarded at the Nashville Inn, kept by a Mr. Edmonson, the home of all the military officers whom business or pleasure called to Nashville. It had also been for a long time the stopping place of Old Hickory and his wife, whenever they left their beloved Hermitage for a temporary sojourn in the city. At this house we were domiciled with them weeks at a time. Eating at the same table with persons who attracted so much attention, and meeting them familiarly in the public and private sitting rooms of the establishment, I of course felt well acquainted with them, and my recollections of them are very vivid even now. The General’s appearance has been so often and correctly described, that it would seem almost unnecessary to touch upon it here ; but it will do no harm to give my impressions of him. Picture to yourself a military-looking man, above the ordinary height, dressed plainly, but with great neatness ; dignified and grave—I had almost said stern—but always courteous and affable, with keen, searching eyes, iron-gray hair, standing stiffly up from an expansive forehead, a face somewhat furrowed by care and time, and expressive of deep thought and active intellect, and you have before you the General Jackson who has lived in my memory for thirty years.

“Side by side with him stands a coarse-looking, stout, little old woman, whom you might easily mistake for his washerwoman, were it not for the marked attention he pays her, and the

love and admiration she manifests for him. Her eyes are bright, and express great kindness of heart ; her face is rather broad, her features plain ; her complexion so dark as almost to suggest a mingling of races in that climate where such things sometimes occur. But, withal, her face is so good-natured and motherly, that you immediately feel at ease with her, however shy you may be of the stately person by her side. Her figure is rather full, but loosely and carelessly dressed, so that when she is seated she seems to settle into herself in a manner that is neither graceful nor elegant. I have seen such forms since then, and have thought I should like to experiment upon them with French corsets, to see what they would look like if they were gathered together into some permanent shape. This is Mrs. Jackson. I have heard my mother say that she could imagine that in her early youth, at the time the General yielded to her fascinations, she may have been a bright, sparkling brunette ; perhaps, may have even passed for a beauty. But being without any culture, and out of the way of refining influences, she was, at the time we knew her, such as I have described.

“ Their affection for each other was of the tenderest kind. The General always treated her as if she were his pride and glory, and words can faintly describe her devotion to him. The Nashville Inn was at this time filled with celebrities, nearly all warm supporters of the General. The Stokes family, of North Carolina, were there, particular friends of his, and many other families whose names have escaped my memory. I well recollect to what disadvantage Mrs. Jackson appeared, with her dowdyfied figure, her inelegant conversation, and her total want of refinement, in the midst of this highly cultivated group, and I recall very distinctly how the ladies of the Jackson party hovered near her at all times, apparently to save her from saying or doing any thing which might do discredit to their idol. With all her disadvantages in externals, I know she was really beloved. She was a truly good woman, the very soul of benevolence and kindness, and one almost overlooked her deficiencies in the knowl-



edge of her intrinsic worth, and her real goodness of heart. With a different husband, and under different circumstances, she might have appeared to greater advantage; but there could not be a more striking contrast than in their case. And the strangest of it all was, that the General did not seem aware of it.

“My father visited them at the Hermitage more than once. It was customary for the army officers to do this as a mark of respect to the General, and they frequently remained in their hospitable mansion several days at a time. The latch-string was always out, and all who visited them were made welcome, and felt themselves at home. I remember my father’s telling an anecdote characteristic of Mrs. Jackson, which impressed my young mind forcibly. After the evening meal at the Hermitage, he and some other officers were seated with the worthy couple by their ample fire-place. Mrs. Jackson, as was her favorite custom, lighted her pipe, and having taken a whiff or two, handed it to my father, saying: ‘Honey, wont you take a smoke?’

“The enthusiasm of the people of Nashville for their favorite has been descanted upon years ago. I remember well the extravagant demonstrations of it, especially after the result of the election was known. I walked the streets with my father the night of the illumination, to see the brilliant display. I think but two houses were dark, and these were both mobbed. One was the mansion of Judge McNairy, who, you know, was once a friend of Jackson, but for some reason became opposed to him, and at that time was one of the very few whigs in Nashville. On that triumphant night the band played the hymn familiar to all, beginning ‘Blow ye the trumpet, blow,’ and ending ‘The year of Jubilee is come, return ye ransomed people home.’ This certainly seemed like deifying the man whom they delighted to honor, and I remember it seemed very wicked to me.

“When the old man finally started for Washington, a crowd of ladies were assembled on the piazza of the hotel, overlooking the Cumberland River, to ‘see the conquering

hero go.' I mingled with them, and distinctly remember hearing one lady say she had had a good-bye kiss from the General, and she should not wash it off for a month. Oh ! what a noise there was ! A parrot, which had been brought up a democrat, was hurraing for Jackson, and the clapping, shouting, and waving of handkerchiefs have seldom been equaled. When the steamboat passed out of sight, and they realized that he was really gone, the city seemed to subside and settle down, as if the object of its being was accomplished.

“ But the sad part of my remembrances is the death of Mrs. Jackson. Early one bright, pleasant morning, my father was putting on his uniform, to go with the other officers then in the city, to the Hermitage, to escort the President-elect to Nashville. Before he had completed his toilet, a black man left at the door a hand-bill, announcing Mrs. Jackson's death, and requesting the officers to come to the Hermitage, with the usual badges of mourning, to attend her funeral. She had died very suddenly at night, without any apparent disease, it being very generally supposed that her death was occasioned by excess of joy at her husband's election. When it was discovered that she was dead, the General could not be prevailed upon to part with her body, but held it tightly in his arms until almost forced from his embrace.

“ This news caused great commotion. Many ladies went out to superintend the funeral, and displayed more zeal than judgment by arraying the body in white satin, with kid gloves and slippers. Pearl ear-rings and necklace were likewise placed upon it ; but, at the suggestion of some whose good sense had not entirely forsaken them, I believe these ornaments were removed. The day of the funeral proving damp and drizzly, the walk from the house to the grave was laid with cotton for the procession to pass over.

“ Notwithstanding the grief displayed by the friends of this really good woman, on account of her sudden death, it was supposed by many that they felt it, after all, a relief ; for it was a matter of great anxiety how she would appear as

mistress of the White House, especially as some of her warm but injudicious friends had selected and prepared an outfit for the occasion more suitable for a young and beautiful bride, than for a homely, withered-looking, old woman.\*

Who can record impressions like a woman ?

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## CHAPTER XV.

### INAUGURATION.

THERE was no time for mourning. Haggard with grief and watching, "twenty years older in a night," as one of his friends remarked, the President-elect was compelled to enter without delay upon the labor of preparing for his journey to Washington. His inaugural address, the joint production of himself, Major Lewis, and Henry Lee, was written at the house of Major Lewis, near Nashville. But one slight alteration was made in this document after the General reached the seat of government. General Jackson furnished the leading ideas ; Major Lewis made some suggestions ; Henry Lee gave it form and style.

Before leaving home, the General drew up a series of rules for the guidance of his administration, one of which was, that no member of his cabinet should be his successor. General Jackson left home resolved to do right in his high office. I know this to be true. Whether he ruled wisely or the contrary, it is certain that he left the grave of his wife determined, in his inmost soul, to stand by the people of the United States, and administer the government with a single eye to their good. But woe to those who had slandered and killed that wife ! These two feelings had no struggle for

\* The *New York American* suggested for the epitaph of Mrs. Jackson the following words :

"*ILLA VERO FELIX, NON TAM CLARITATE VITÆ, QUAM OPPORTUNITATE MORTIS.*"

mastery in his peculiarly constituted nature. In him they were one and the same.

He was accompanied to Washington by his nephew, Andrew Jackson Donelson, who was to be his private secretary; by Mrs. Andrew Jackson Donelson, who was to preside over the official mansion; by a beautiful and accomplished neice of Mrs. Jackson, who was to reside with him, and assist Mrs. Donelson to do the honors of his house; by Henry Lee, his able scribe, who went with him to be appointed to an office; and, lastly, by Major Lewis, whose intention was merely to witness the inauguration and then return to his plantation. The artist, Earl, followed the General soon, and resided at the White House during the whole period of General Jackson's occupation of it, engaged always in painting the President's portrait. It was well understood by the seekers of presidential favor that it did no harm to order a portrait of General Jackson from this artist, who was facetiously named the king's painter. Mr. Earl never stood still for lack of orders.

The party left Nashville on a Sunday afternoon about the middle of January. The journey to Washington—every one knows what it must have been. The complete, the instantaneous acquiescence of the people of the United States in the decision of a constitutional majority—a redeeming feature of our politics—was well illustrated on this occasion. The steamboat that conveyed the General and his party down the Cumberland to the Ohio and up the Ohio to Pittsburg, a voyage of several days, was saluted or cheered as often as it passed a human habitation. At Cincinnati, it seemed as if all Ohio, and, at Pittsburg, as if all Pennsylvania, had rushed forth to shout a welcome to the President-elect. Indeed, the whole country appeared to more than acquiesce in the result of the election.

Very many of the supporters of Mr. Adams felt, doubtless, as Ezekiel Webster felt, when he wrote to his brother Daniel, in February, 1829: "The people always supported Mr. Adams' cause from a cold sense of duty, and not from

any liking of the man. We soon satisfy ourselves that we have discharged our duty to the cause of any man, when we do not entertain for him one personal kind feeling, and can not, unless we disembowel ourselves, like a trussed turkey, of all that is human nature within us. If there had been at the head of affairs a man of popular character, like Mr. Clay, or any man whom we are not compelled by our natures, instincts, and fixed fate to dislike, the result would have been different."

So, the whole country joined, at last, in the cry, Hurra for Jackson ! Some few daring spirits at Hartford, we are told, burned the President-elect in effigy in the evening of the sacred 8th of January ; but the public indignation was such, that the authorities of the city offered a reward of one hundred dollars for the "conviction of the persons engaged in it." So says the sedate Mr. Niles ; who also records, in his brief manner, without comment, that General Jackson did not call upon President Adams on his arrival in Washington. The reader knows why he did not. The precious register of Mr. Niles rescues likewise from oblivion the fact, that "General Merkle of Franklin Market, New York," sent to General Jackson "a piece of the celebrated ox, Grand Canal, as a suitable tribute of General Merkle's high respect for the patriotism General Jackson has uniformly displayed in the public service of his country, and hopes at the same time it may arrive to grace his table on the 4th of March."

General Merkle had the pleasure of receiving an autograph acknowledgment from General Jackson : "Permit me, sir, to assure you of the gratification which I felt in being enabled to place on my table so fine a specimen of your market, and to offer you my sincere thanks for so acceptable a token of your regard for my character."\*

\* "BUTCHER POLITENESS.—An English butcher lately sent a haunch of pure Southdown mutton to the Emperor. He has since received, through the medium of the French ambassador in London, an autograph letter from the Tuileries, acknowledging the thanks of the Emperor, and accompanying it with a gold medal intrinsically worth twenty guineas."—*Newspaper*, 1860.

Hurra for Jackson! It was the universal cry. Mr. Adams would not have written to General Merkle, of Franklin Market, New York, perhaps. Was there a butcher in the Union who did not take the General's autograph as a personal compliment!

While General Jackson was receiving hundreds of visitors daily at his rooms in the Indian Queen Tavern, commonly styled the Wigwam, the White House, we are informed, was nearly deserted. Judge Story mentions, in one of his letters to his wife, that the "birth-night ball" (February 22d), was thinly attended this year. "Mr. Adams has no more favors to bestow, and he is now passed by with indifference by all the fair-weather friends. They are all ready to hail the rising sun. . Never have I felt so forcibly the emptiness of public honors and public favor." Eight years later, there was a setting sun who was not "passed by with indifference" by friend or foe.

From the seemingly rash and careless remarks of General Jackson upon the alleged bargain between Messrs. Adams and Clay, some readers may have inferred that the General was not, at all times, master of his tongue. Such an inference is incorrect. When it was his cue to be silent, no man could keep his own counsel better. All Washington was busied, during these weeks, with conjectures as to the course of the President-elect, and above all, as to his intentions with regard to appointments and removals. But all conjecturing was vain. Nothing was ascertained until he chose to reveal it. Daniel Webster wrote home just before the General's arrival: "General Jackson will be here about the 15th February. Nobody knows what he will do when he does come. Many letters are sent to him; he answers none of them. His friends here pretend to be very knowing; but be assured, not one of them has any confidential communication from him. Great efforts are making to put him up to a general sweep, as to all offices; springing from great doubt whether he is disposed to go it."

A few days after General Jackson's arrival, Mr. Webster

resumed his observations upon the scene around him. "Of course," said he, "the city is full of speculation and speculators. 'A great multitude,' too many to be fed without a miracle, are already in the city, hungry for office. Especially, I learn, that the typographical corps is assembled in great force. From New Hampshire, our friend Hill; from Boston, Mr. Greene; from Connecticut, Mr. Norton; from New York, Mr. Noah; from Kentucky, Mr. Kendall; and from everywhere else, somebody else. So many friends ready to advise, and whose advice is so disinterested, make somewhat of a numerous council about the President-elect; and, if report be true, it is a council which only 'makes that darker, which was dark enough before.' For these reasons, or these with others, nothing is settled yet about the new cabinet. I suppose Mr. Van Buren will be Secretary of State; but beyond that, I do not think any thing is yet determined." This was written on the 19th of February.

Coming events, however, were already casting shadows before. A Washington letter of the time, published in the *New York American*, contains this note-worthy passage: "There are strong symptoms of a speedy dissolution of the 'Combination.' The ends of both sections of the party are answered. The game has been run down, and, like hounds, they are about fighting for the prey they have made their own. Van Buren's friends wish to have him in the Cabinet. To this Calhoun's object, and these rival chieftains scatter through the crowd, by means of their partisans, ambiguous phrases, pregnant with future contests and political divisions."

General Jackson, meanwhile, so closely concealed his intentions that, as late as the second of March, Mr. Webster still wrote home that nobody in Washington knew whether many or any changes in the subordinate offices of the government would be made. "Probably," he wrote, "General Jackson will make some removals, but I think not a great many immediately. But we shall soon see." Yes, we shall soon see.

The day of the inauguration was one of the brightest and balmiest of the spring. An eye-witness shall describe to us the memorable scene :

“ No one who was at Washington at the time of General Jackson's inauguration is likely to forget that period to the day of his death. To us, who had witnessed the quiet and orderly period of the Adams' administration, it seemed as if half the nation had rushed at once into the Capital. It was like the inundation of the northern barbarians into Rome, save that the tumultuous tide came in from a different point of the compass. The West and the South seemed to have precipitated themselves upon the North and overwhelmed it. On that memorable occasion you might tell a 'Jackson man' almost as far as you could see him. Their every motion seemed to cry out 'victory !' Strange faces filled every public place, and every face seemed to bear defiance on its brow. It appeared to me that every Jackson editor in the country was on the spot. They swarmed, especially in the lobbies of the House, an expectant host, a sort of Prætorian band, which, having borne in upon their shields their idolized leader, claimed the reward of the hard-fought contest. His quarters were assailed, surrounded, hemmed in, so that it was an achievement to get into his presence. On the morning of the inauguration, the vicinity of the Capitol was like a great agitated sea ; every avenue to the fateful spot was blocked up with people, in so much that the legitimate procession which accompanied the President-elect could scarce make its way to the eastern portico, where the ceremony was to be performed. To repress the crowd in front, a ship's cable was stretched across about two-thirds of the way up the long flight of steps by which the Capitol is approached on that side, but it seemed, at times, as if even this would scarce prove sufficient to restrain the eagerness of the multitude, every man of whom seemed bent on the glory of shaking the President's hand. Never can I forget the spectacle which presented itself on every side, nor the electrifying moment when the eager, expectant eyes of that vast and motley mul-



titude caught sight of the tall and imposing form of their adored leader, as he came forth between the columns of the portico, the color of the whole mass changed, as if by miracle ; all hats were off at once, and the dark tint which usually pervades a mixed map of men was turned, as by a magic wand, into the bright hue of ten thousand upturned and exultant human faces, radiant with sudden joy. The peal of shouting that arose rent the air, and seemed to shake the very ground. But when the Chief Justice took his place and commenced the brief ceremony of administering the oath of office, it quickly sank into comparative silence ; and as the new President proceeded to read his inaugural address, the stillness gradually increased ; but all efforts to hear him, beyond a brief space immediately around, were utterly vain.”\*

Mr. Webster, in his serio-comic manner, remarks : “ I never saw such a crowd here before. Persons have come five hundred miles to see General Jackson, *and they really seem to think that the country is rescued from some dreadful danger!*”

The ceremony over, the President drove from the Capitol to the White House, followed soon by a great part of the crowd who had witnessed the inauguration. Judge Story, a strenuous Adams man, did not enjoy the scene which the apartments of the “ palace,” as he styles it, presented on this occasion. “ After the ceremony was over,” he wrote, “ the President went to the palace to receive company, and there he was visited by immense crowds of all sorts of people, from the highest and most polished, down to the most vulgar and gross in the nation. I never saw such a mixture. The reign of King Mob seemed triumphant. I was glad to escape from the scene as soon as possible.” A letter writer said : “ A profusion of refreshments had been provided. Orange punch by barrels full was made, but as the waiters opened the door to bring it out, a rush would be made, the glasses broken, the pails of liquor upset, and the most painful confusion pre-

\* Arthur J. Stansbury, in *Arthur's Home Gazette*, May, 1851.

vailed. To such a painful degree was this carried, that wine and ice-creams could not be brought out to the ladies, and tubs of punch were taken from the lower story into the garden, to lead off the crowd from the rooms. On such an occasion it was certainly difficult to keep any thing like order, but it was mortifying to see men, with boots heavy with mud, standing on the damask satin covered chairs, from their eagerness to get a sight of the President."

The inaugural address of the new President, which has been characterized as vague and meaningless, seems to me to be as plain and straightforward as his peculiar and difficult position admitted. On the one hand, General Jackson, by his writings and his votes, was committed to a protective tariff and internal improvement policy. On the other, he had been elected to the presidency by the strict constructionist party. His inaugural was a clear enough *acceptance of the leadership of the party which had elected him*. The entire subject of internal improvements was disposed of in one short sentence, which is, considering the circumstances, almost comic. "Internal improvements," said the President, "and the diffusion of knowledge, so far as they can be promoted by the constitutional acts of the federal government, are of high importance." Not another word. Henry Lee, I imagine, was not the author of that sentence.

The tariff men were favored with the following: "With regard to a proper selection of the subjects of impost, with a view to revenue, it would seem to me that the spirit of equity, caution, and compromise in which the constitution was formed, requires that the great interests of agriculture, commerce, and manufactures, should be equally favored; and that, perhaps, the only exception to this rule should consist in the peculiar encouragement of any products of either of them that may be found essential to our national independence.

For those who might chance to remember General Jackson's farewell address to the army, a long paragraph was inserted, which declared standing armies "dangerous to free

governments in time of peace," and entitled a patriotic militia "the bulwark of our defense," and "the impenetrable ægis" of our liberties.

For the illumination of any who might have been recently looking over the Monroe correspondence, a few sentences were added, which made half the office-holders in the country quake in their slippers: "The recent demonstration of public sentiment inscribes on the list of executive duties, in characters too legible to be overlooked, the task of reform, which will require, particularly, the correction of those abuses that have brought the patronage of the federal government into conflict with the freedom of elections, and the counteraction of those causes which have disturbed the rightful course of appointment, and have placed or continued power in unfaithful or incompetent hands."

It was in this passage that the slight alteration, before alluded to, was made after the General reached Washington. Mr. McLean, who was expected to continue in the office of Postmaster-General, objected to the policy dimly shadowed forth in these remarks, and they were, in consequence, so changed as to make the President himself responsible for the acts contemplated. The phrase "executive duties" was substituted for one which was supposed to throw the responsibility more upon the members of the Cabinet. As Mr. McLean was still intractable, he was comfortably shelved on the bench of the Supreme Court, which he has since adorned.

Mr. Clay left Washington a few days after the inauguration. A public dinner was given before his departure, at which he spoke of the new President in language and temper highly honorable to himself:

"That citizen," said he, "has done me much injustice—wanton, unprovoked, and unatoned injustice. It was inflicted as I must ever believe, for the double purpose of gratifying private resentment, and promoting personal ambition.

"When, during the late canvass, he came forward in the public prints, under his proper name, with his charge against me, and summoned before the public tribunal his friend and his only witness to establish it, the anx-

ious attention of the whole American people was directed to the testimony which that witness might render. He promptly obeyed the call, and testified to what he knew. He could say nothing, and he said nothing which cast the slightest shade upon my honor or integrity. What he did say, was the reverse of any implication of me. Then, all just and impartial men, and all who had faith in the magnanimity of my accuser, believed that he would voluntarily make a public acknowledgment of his error. How far this reasonable expectation has been fulfilled let his persevering and stubborn silence attest.

“But my relations to that citizen by a recent event are now changed. He is the Chief Magistrate of my country, invested with large and extensive powers, the administration of which may conduce to its prosperity, or occasion its adversity. Patriotism enjoins as a duty, that while he is in that exalted station, he should be treated with decorum, and his official acts be judged of in a spirit of candor. Suppressing, as far as I can, a sense of my personal wrong, willing even to forgive him, if his own conscience and our common God can acquit him; and entertaining for the majority which has elected him, and for the office which he fills, all the deference which is due from a private citizen, I most anxiously hope, that under his guidance, the great interests of our country, foreign and domestic, may be upheld, our free institutions be unimpaired, and the happiness of the nation, be continued and increased.”

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## CHAPTER XVI.

### THE CABINET AND THE KITCHEN CABINET.

It is not so well known to the public, as it is to society in Washington, that there is an imaginary difference of rank between the members of the cabinet. The Secretary of State, every one knows, is at the head of the cabinet, and sits at the President's right hand in cabinet councils, and takes precedence of every one except the President and the Vice-President. Next to him is the Secretary of the Treasury, who also has more valuable offices in his gift than any other cabinet minister; the entire custom-house system of the country being under his control. The Secretary of War ranks third, and the Secretary of the Navy fourth. The Attorney-Gen-

eral formerly closed the list, as the Post-Master General was not, technically speaking, a member of the cabinet. Early in the administration of the new President, however, that officer was formally created a cabinet minister.

So little was known of General Jackson's intentions with regard to cabinet appointments that some of the members of the cabinet of Mr. Adams were actually in doubt whether they ought to resign or not. Mr. Wirt, the Attorney-General, wrote to Mr. Monroe, asking his opinion on the point. Mr. Monroe advised him to resign, but added, that, in all probability, the new President would desire to retain the services of an officer who, for twelve years, had discharged the duties of his place to universal acceptance. So well did General Jackson keep his secret, that no man in or out of Washington, except the chosen few, knew who would compose the new administration, until the General, with his own hands, gave to the editor of the *Telegraph* the list for publication. It appeared in the official newspaper on the 26th of February. It would not even then have seen the light but for the secret opposition made to one of the appointments.

Soon after General Jackson arrived at the seat of government, he informed Edward Livingston of Louisiana, that Mr. Van Buren was the foreordained Secretary of State of the incoming administration, and offered him the choice of the seats remaining. Mr. Livingston, just then elected to the Senate, preferred his Senatorship to any office in the government except the one already appropriated.

In distributing the six great offices, General Jackson assigned two to the north, two to the west, and two to the south.

Mr. Van Buren accepted the first place without hesitation, resigned the governorship of New York after holding it seventy days, and entered upon his duties at Washington three weeks after the inauguration.

Samuel D. Ingham, of Pennsylvania, was appointed to the second place in the cabinet, that of Secretary of the Treasury. Mr. Ingham came of a sturdy Bucks county

Quaker family, a thriving, industrious race, settled there for four generations. His father, a physician, farmer, and clothier, was also a devotee of classical learning, and a dissenter from the tenets of the broad-brimmed sect. His son, Samuel, showing no great inclination for classical knowledge, was apprenticed to a paper-maker, and, in due time, set up a paper-mill on the paternal farm, which proved a successful venture. From the peaceful pursuits of business he was drawn away gradually into the whirl of politics, presiding at town and county meetings of the democratic party ; serving in such offices as justice of the peace, member of the Assembly, and Secretary of the commonwealth, until, in 1813, he took his seat in the House of Representatives ; a position which, with one short interval, he held until his transfer to the cabinet of General Jackson. He was not a speaking member, nor did he ever acquire any general celebrity ; but, as a business man, his services upon important committees were valued. His successful management of his private business, in circumstances of more than usual difficulty, constructing his mill in a region where not a mechanic whom he employed had ever seen one, and starting it with far more credit than capital, proves him to have been a man of executive ability. His conduct with regard to the bargain and corruption cry stamps him a false or a narrow soul. In Pennsylvania, during the late canvass, he had aided poor Kremer with all his talents and all his influence in deluding the voters of his native State into the belief that Mr. Adams had obtained the presidency through a corrupt understanding with Mr. Clay. He wrote an electioneering pamphlet against Mr. Adams, which that gentleman characterized as a gross misrepresentation of his conduct and opinions. Mr. Ingham, as we have before stated, was one of the original Calhoun men of Pennsylvania. He was still a friend and ally of Mr. Calhoun, and it was thought at the time that he owed his place in the cabinet to Mr. Calhoun's influence. This was probably not the case. Ingham had done enough during the late campaign to give him a first place in the regard of the new President ; and the

Jackson members of Congress from Pennsylvania, on being consulted by General Jackson, united in naming Ingham as Pennsylvania's elect and precious.

John H. Eaton, Senator from Tennessee, was appointed Secretary of War. General Jackson was, from the first, determined to have in his cabinet one of his own Tennessee circle of friends. The choice lay between the two Senators, Eaton and White. Feb. 23d, Major Eaton wrote the following note to Judge White: "A letter, received some time ago from General Jackson, stated he desired you or me to be near him. In a recent conversation with him, he remarked that he had had a full and free conversation with you; and at the close remarked that he desired to have me with him. I presumed, without inquiring, that he had probably talked with you on the subject, and that you had declined accepting any situation, as you before had told me would be your feelings. Nothing definite has taken place on this matter between General Jackson and myself, and I hope you know me well enough, and my regard and friendship for you, to know this, that I should never permit myself to stand in competition with any desire you may entertain. If you have any desire, say so to me in confidence, and it shall so be received. If you have none, then in reference to every and all considerations I should consent to any such appointment. Think of this, and give me your opinion frankly."\*

Every one acquainted with Judge White knew well what reply he would make to such a communication. Major Eaton was appointed.

Major Lewis favors the reader with a brief account of Eaton's career. "He lived," writes Major Lewis, "at Franklin, a small town eighteen miles south of Nashville. It is the county seat of Williamson county, one of the finest counties in the State, and is situated on the road leading from Nashville to Columbia, the town in which President Polk lived. Major Eaton, however, during the whole time he was in the Senate (a period of eleven years) spent the

\* Memoirs of Hugh L. White, p. 266.

greater part of his time in Washington. He was a native of North Carolina, and came to Tennessee in 1808, or 1809, then being about twenty-two years of age. Having lost his father, the duty of taking care of his mother and his younger brother and sister devolved upon him, he being the eldest son. He purchased a comfortable residence in town for the family, and a tract of land in the neighborhood to place their negroes upon ; and, after having made these arrangements, he returned to North Carolina, and, in due time, moved the whole family to Tennessee, and located them in Franklin, where his mother resided as long as she lived.

“ Mr. Eaton was a man of education, having graduated, I think, at Chapel Hill, and was a lawyer by profession. Although a young man, and comparatively a stranger, and without family connections, he soon acquired a very respectable standing at the bar. He practiced not only in Franklin, where he lived, but in the adjacent counties, and, in the course of a few years, he became, by his pleasant and agreeable manners, and fine conversational talent, quite a favorite both of the bar and the bench. He was also a pleasant and interesting speaker, and, by his finely modulated voice, never failed to command the attention of the auditory. In 1818, he was appointed a Senator in Congress, by Governor McMinn, to fill a vacancy occasioned by the resignation of the Hon. George W. Campbell, who had been sent to Russia as Minister, by President Monroe. Among those most active in getting up a recommendation to the Governor for his appointment to the Senate, was our distinguished fellow-citizen, John Bell. He was afterward elected three times to the Senate by the legislature of his State, but he had served only two years, I think, of his last term when General Jackson offered him a seat in his cabinet, which was accepted. After this, having lost his mother, brother, and sister, he never returned to Tennessee to live.”

For the moment this narrative must content us. We shall have to return to this gentleman ere long, and complete Major Lewis' story.



The Navy Department was assigned to John Branch, for many years a Senator from North Carolina. Mr. Branch was not one of those who achieve greatness, nor one of those who have greatness thrust upon them. He was born to it. Inheriting an ample estate, he lived for many years upon his plantations and employed himself in superintending their culture. A man of respectable talents, good presence, and high social position, he was naturally enough chosen to represent his State in the Senate, afterward to be its Governor, and again to the Senate. In his public career I find one act recorded which was peculiarly calculated to secure him the favorable consideration of General Jackson. He voted against the confirmation of Henry Clay, as Secretary of State, in 1825. For the rest, Governor Branch was a gentleman of the strict constructionist persuasion, a friend of Mr. Calhoun, an entirely respectable, but not a brilliant nor even a well-known character.

John McPherson Berrien, of Georgia, was appointed Attorney-General. Mr. Berrien was born and educated in New Jersey, graduating at Nassau Hall, but was admitted to the bar in Georgia, where he rose to great and merited eminence as a lawyer, Judge, and legislator. Appearing as a Senator in 1824, he exhibited talents more than respectable, and was noted for somewhat extreme opinions on those questions which were destined to create painful differences between North and South. A warm, even passionate lover of the Union, he yet opposed most vigorously the tariff bill, for which General Jackson had voted, and was among the foremost in his opposition to the revived heterodoxy of Mr. Adams' messages. He, too, like Governor Branch, voted against Mr. Clay's confirmation in 1825 ; and, like Governor Branch, looked up to Mr. Calhoun as the South's peculiar champion.

William T. Barry, of Kentucky, was appointed Postmaster General. Elected to Congress at the age of twenty-seven, Mr. Barry had been in public life for twenty years ; chiefly, however, in State offices. He fought in the war of 1812 with great credit, under General Harrison, and was afterward the conspicuous friend of Henry Clay, supporting

him for the presidency in 1824. But Mr. Clay's conduct in giving the presidency to and accepting office under Mr. Adams, Major Barry could not stomach ; and there was first a coolness and then a bitterness between the old friends. To aid in defeating the administration and to bring in General Jackson, he had consented to run for the governorship of Kentucky against the Clay candidate, an office which he had more than once declined, and did not then desire. He just lost his election, but the canvass powerfully aided the Jackson party, and gave them confident hopes of carrying the State at the presidential election, which hopes, we know, were realized. How could General Jackson feel otherwise than grateful to the man who had put upon Henry Clay the exquisite mortification of losing the support of his own Kentucky ? Major Barry was an agreeable and amiable man, but not a man of business—not the man for the most perplexing post in the administration. Nor was he generally known, even by name, beyond the borders of his own State.

The Cabinet, taken as a whole, and compared with those which had preceded it, could not be called splendid. There was some show of justice in a common remark of the time : “ This is the millennium of the minnows.” Leaving Mr. Van Buren out of view, the only cohesive element in it, common to all, was an aversion to Mr. Clay. Eaton was a Jackson man ; Ingham, Branch, and Berrien, were Calhoun men ; but all were anti-Clay men. The reader will not have to read many pages more before imbibing an impression that the anti-Clayism of these gentlemen was that which particularly endeared them to the new President. The appointment to the Russian Mission of John Randolph, who had fought a duel with Henry Clay three years before, strengthens this conjecture.

I should mention, perhaps, in justice to General Jackson, that Henry Clay had himself taken the stump during the late campaign in Kentucky, and denounced the General in terms of unmeasured, and, sometimes, indecent severity. Gentlemen who heard Mr. Clay on these occasions, inform me that his printed speeches are moderate and tame com-

pared with those which he delivered in the open air, to the "hunters of Kentucky," during the campaign. He could not speak of the bargain and corruption calumny without boiling over with fury, and pouring forth a torrent of fierce Kentuckian invective. No doubt there were obliging individuals among the crowd, who took care that Mr. Clay's wrathful phrases should be reported to General Jackson. It was, moreover, a fixed idea in the General's mind, that the secret originator of the calumnies against Mrs. Jackson was no other than Mr. Clay. Mr. Clay solemnly denied and completely disproved the charge, but he could never remove that fixed idea from the soul of General Jackson.

Such, then, was the first Cabinet of the new President. With the exception of Mr. Van Buren, its members had no great influence over the measures of their chief, and play no great part in the general history of the times. There were other individuals who stood nearer to the President than they did, and exerted over him a far more potent influence.

A few days after the inauguration, Major Lewis, who had his quarters in the White House, informed the President that he was about to return to Tennessee, as it was the planting season and his plantation required his attention. "Why, Major," said the President, "you are not going to leave me here *alone*, after doing more than any other man to bring me here?" The General clung to his Tennessee friends, ever lonely, always mourning for his dead wife. Major Lewis relented. It was agreed that he should accept an auditorship of the treasury, and remain a member of the President's family. Major Lewis, I must remind the reader, was a brother-in-law of Major Eaton. It seems a trifling fact to mention twice. The reader will discover soon that it was one of those little facts which influence great affairs.

General Duff Green, editor of the *United States Telegraph*, was much about the person of the President during the first month of his administration, and was supposed to have more influence over him than perhaps, he really possessed. He had been the editor of a newspaper at St. Louis,

and had come to Washington, some months before, a poor man, to effect an exchange of his paper for one published in Washington. He succeeded in his object ; supported General Jackson with all the ardor and ability of which he was master ; obtained in the spring of 1829, before the inauguration, a share of the public printing ; was then a prosperous gentleman ; and his paper became the confidential organ of the new administration. He was fierce for the removal from office of those who were not devotees of the new administration. General Green was and is a jovial soul, a capital storyteller, a pleasant host, liberal in expenditure, formed to go gaily with the tide, not to buffet the billows of opposition.

Editor Isaac Hill from New Hampshire, was in high favor at the White House from the very beginning of the new administration. The early life of this man was so curiously like that of Horace Greeley, that the narration of it would answer as well for the one as the other. A poor, little, lame New Hampshire boy. Consumed with a passion for reading. Scouring the country for books. Reading every thing, from "Law's Call to the Unconverted" to a penny almanac. Tramping miles for a newspaper. Learning the printer's trade because he so loved to read. Serving his time in the office of that very *Farmer's Cabinet*, at Amherst, New Hampshire, which the youthful Greeley lay in wait for by the roadside and devoured in secret. Setting up a newspaper with immense difficulty, and struggling for years for a circulation in a State that was a stronghold of federalism, until he made it democratic. A prosperous man, at length. He published books, and kept a thriving book-store, and had other irons in the fire, which he contrived to keep hot. A keen party man, and made the more so by many years of active but unsuccessful warfare with a party that despised more than they hated the name of democrat. During the strife of 1828, he had written, and spoken, and schemed, and traveled for Jackson, incurring rancorous hostility and suffering personal violence. Unable to carry the State for his candidate, he had fought such a fight for him as excited General Jackson's admiration

and gratitude. The indomitable Isaac went to Washington to console himself with the triumph of the inauguration, and the new President gave him more than a friendly welcome. Before the month of March closed, Isaac Hill found himself appointed to the second Comptrollership of the Treasury, at a salary of three thousand dollars a year, and ten clerkships in his gift. Like Duff Green, he was urgent for the removal of those who had opposed the election of General Jackson.

“Every State in New England,” said he in the *New Hampshire Patriot*, in November, 1828, “is now governed by the same aristocracy that ruled in 1798—that ruled during the late war. The republicans here are in a minority ; but the late election show them to be a glorious majority of the whole Union. A band of New England democrats have encountered the dominant party at vast odds—they have suffered every species of persecution and contumely. Shall these men not be protected by the administration of the people under General Jackson ? If that administration fail to extend this protection, then indeed it will fail of one of the principal objects for which the people placed them in power by at least two to one of the votes of the Union.”

Was there ever a pair of ears so prepared to listen favorably to such sentiments as those of General Jackson in 1829 ? Will he be able to carry out the doctrines avowed in certain letters to Mr. Monroe in 1816 and 1817 ?

Amos Kendall, late the editor of a Jackson paper in Kentucky, a native of Massachusetts, was present at the inauguration, was taken into the President's confidence, was appointed fourth Auditor of the Treasury. He began his long official career with the most virtuous resolutions. “The interest of the country,” he wrote to a friend, March 24th, 1829, “demands that the Fourth Auditor's office shall be filled with men of business, and not with babbling politicians. Partisan feelings shall not enter here, if I can keep them out. To others belong the whole business of electioneering. To me and my clerks other duties are assigned. Them I shall endeavor to discharge in the spirit of reform, which has made

General Jackson President. Vain I may be, proud I am, that the President has given me an opportunity to aid him in proving that reform is not an empty sound, and is not to apply merely to a change of men. Henceforth, assiduously devoted to my official duties, I shall leave my enemies and his, to their freedom of speech and the press, resting my claims to public confidence on my acts."

Man proposes : the System disposes. Never was there a busier electioneering office-holder than Mr. Kendall. He was, however, a man of indefatigable industry, and performed both his in-door and out-door duties with zeal.

These were the gentlemen—Lewis, Green, Hill and Kendall—who, at the beginning of the new administration, were supposed to have most of the President's ear and confidence, and were stigmatized by the opposition as the Kitchen Cabinet. Major Donelson, as the private secretary of the President, was also a personage of importance in the White House and in the society of Washington. General Call, formerly the General's aid, now the delegate from the Territory of Florida, was much the President's friend and often his companion.

Colonel James Watson Webb, it is evident from the columns of the *Courier and Enquirer*, was kept better advised of the secrets of the White House than any other editor out of Washington. Colonel Webb, as it chanced, had particular relations both with Mr. Van Buren and with Mr. Calhoun. He was a native of the same county as Mr. Van Buren, and had long been his friend and supporter. Mr. Calhoun, on the other hand, had given Colonel Webb his commission in the army, and given it to him in such circumstances, and in such a manner, as secured him the friendship and gratitude of the young soldier for life.

In after times, when the course of political events placed the *Courier* in opposition to Mr. Calhoun, no word disrespectful to him personally was admitted into its editorial columns ; nor did Colonel Webb ever visit Washington, even at that mad period, without calling upon his early benefactor.

## CHAPTER XVII.

## MRS. EATON.

WILLIAM O'NEAL kept at Washington for many years a large old-fashioned tavern, where members of Congress, in considerable numbers, boarded during the sessions of the national legislature. William O'Neal had a daughter, sprightly and beautiful, who aided him and his wife in entertaining his boarders. It is not good for a girl to grow up in a large tavern. Peg O'Neal as she was called, was so lively in her deportment, so free in her conversation, that, had she been born twenty years later, she would have been called one of the "fast" girls of Washington. A witty, pretty, saucy, active tavern-keeper's daughter, who makes free with the inmates of her father's house, and is made free with by them, may escape contamination, but not calumny.

When Major Eaton first came to Washington as a Senator of the United States in the year 1818, he took board at Mr. O'Neal's tavern, and continued to reside there every winter for ten years. He became acquainted, of course, with the family, including the vivacious and attractive Peg. When General Jackson came to the city as Senator in 1823, he also went to live with the O'Neals, whom he had known in Washington before it had become the seat of government. For Mrs. O'Neal, who was a remarkably efficient woman, he had a particular respect. Even during his presidency, when he was supposed to visit no one, it was one of his favorite relaxations, when worn out with business, to stroll with Major Lewis across the "old fields" near Washington to the cottage where Mrs. O'Neal lived in retirement, and enjoy an hour's chat with the old lady. Mrs. Jackson, also, during her residence in Washington in 1825, became attached to the good Mrs. O'Neal and to her daughter.

In the course of time Miss O'Neal became the wife of purser Timberlake of the United States Navy, and the mother

of two children. In 1828 came news that Mr. Timberlake, then on duty in the Mediterranean, had cut his throat in a fit of melancholy, induced, it was said, by previous intoxication. On hearing this intelligence, Major Eaton, then a widower, felt an inclination to marry Mrs. Timberlake, for whom he had entertained an attachment quite as tender as a man could lawfully indulge for the wife of a friend and brother-mason. He took the precaution to consult General Jackson on the subject. "Why, yes, Major," said the General, "if you love the woman, and she will have you, marry her by all means." Major Eaton mentioned, what the General well knew, that Mrs. Timberlake's reputation in Washington had not escaped reproach, and that Major Eaton himself was supposed to have been too intimate with her. "Well," said the General, "your marrying her will disprove these charges, and restore Peg's good name." And so, perhaps, it might, if Major Eaton had not been taken into the Cabinet.

Eaton and Mrs. Timberlake were married in January, 1829, a few weeks before General Jackson arrived at the seat of government. As soon as it was whispered about Washington that Major Eaton was to be a member of the new Cabinet, it occurred with great force to the minds of certain ladies, who supposed themselves to be at the head of society at the Capital, that, in that case, Peg O'Neal would be the wife of a cabinet minister, and, as such, entitled to admission into their own sacred circle. Horrible to contemplate! Forbid it, morality! Forbid it, decency! Forbid it, General Jackson!

Among those who were scandalized at the appointment of Major Eaton was the Rev. J. N. Campbell, pastor of the Presbyterian church in Washington, which the General and Mrs. Jackson had both attended, and which, it was supposed, President Jackson would attend. Not caring to speak with the General himself on the subject, Mr. Campbell communicated the ill things he had heard of Mrs. Eaton to the Rev. E. S. Ely, of Philadelphia, who had known General Jackson in his mercantile days, and had come to Washington to wit-



ness the inauguration of his old friend. Dr. Ely desired to converse with General Jackson on the subject, but finding no opportunity to do so in Washington, wrote to the General, after his return to Philadelphia, a very long letter, in which he detailed all the charges he had heard against Mrs. Eaton. He informed the President that she had borne a bad reputation in Washington from her girlhood; that the ladies of Washington would not speak to her; that a gentleman, at the table of Gadsby's Hotel, was said to have declared that he personally knew her to be a dissolute woman; that Mrs. Eaton had told her servants to call her children Eaton, not Timberlake, for Eaton was their rightful name; that a clergyman of Washington had told Dr. Ely, that a deceased physician had told him, that Mrs. Timberlake had had a miscarriage when her husband had been absent a year; that the friends of Major Eaton had persuaded him to board elsewhere, for the sake of getting him away from Mrs. Timberlake; that Mrs. Jackson herself had entertained the worst opinion of Mrs. Timberlake; that Major Eaton and Mrs. Timberlake had traveled together, and recorded their names on hotel registers as man and wife, in New York and elsewhere.

For your own sake, said the reverend doctor, for your dead wife's sake, for the sake of your administration, for the credit of the government and the country, you should not countenance a woman like this.

This letter was dated March 18th, 1829. General Jackson replied to it immediately, and in a manner peculiarly characteristic. Indeed, all his most peculiar traits were exhibited in the course of this affair.

GENERAL JACKSON TO REV. DR. ELY.

“WASHINGTON, March 23, 1829.

“DEAR SIR: Your confidential letter of the 18th instant has been received in the same spirit of kindness and friendship with which it was written.

“I must here be permitted to remark that I sincerely regret you did not personally name this subject to me before you left Washington, as I

could, in that event, have apprised you of the great exertions made by Clay and his partisans, here and elsewhere, to destroy the character of Mrs. Eaton by the foulest and basest means, so that a deep and lasting wrong might be inflicted on her husband. I could have given you information that would at least have put you on your guard with respect to anonymous letters, containing slanderous insinuations against female character. If such evidence as this is to be received, I ask where is the guarantee for female character, however moral—however *virtuous*?

“To show you how much you have been imposed upon, and how much Mrs. E. has been slandered, I am warranted in the positive contradiction of the very first charge made against her—‘that she was in ill-fame before Mr. Eaton ever saw her’—from the united testimony of the Hon. John Rhea, Dr. Hogg, and others who boarded with Mr. O’Neal, long before Mr. Eaton was a member of Congress. If you feel yourself at liberty to give the names of those secret traducers of female reputation, I entertain no doubt but they will be exposed and consigned to public odium, which should ever be the lot of those whose morbid appetite delights in defamation and slander.

“As to the information of Mr. ———, of Baltimore, I will barely remark that he may be a respectable man; but surely you will agree with me, that a charge so malignant in its character, unless accompanied with indubitable evidence of the criminality of the act, should not have been made, and shows him at once to be destitute of those just, manly, and charitable feelings, which should be characteristic of every good and virtuous man. In contradiction of Mr. ———’s information to you, I have many letters from Baltimore, Pennsylvania, Ohio, and other States, congratulating me and the nation on the selection of Mr. Eaton as one of my Cabinet. Besides these, many members of Congress, and among them the leading members of the New York delegation, expressed personally their high gratification at his appointment. You were assuredly justified in stating to my friends that I have no information, nor ever had, on which any reliance ought to be placed, of any infamous conduct of Mrs. Eaton.

“One observation on the bank conversation. The place where the remark was made is sufficient evidence, to my mind, that it emanated from Clay or his satellites, with a view of completing what he had *here* begun. I am fully warranted in charging Mr. Clay with circulating these slanderous reports, from information derived from a very intelligent lady, who met Mr. Clay and his wife on her way to this city. This lady says Mr. and Mrs. Clay spoke in the strongest and most unmeasured terms of Mrs. Eaton. She inquired of them to know upon what grounds these charges rested. ‘*Rumor, mere rumor,*’ was the answer. So far from this attempt to injure Mrs. Eaton on the part of these personages having the effect intended, the lady, as soon as she arrived, sought to become acquainted

ness the inauguration of his old friend. Dr. Ely desired to converse with General Jackson on the subject, but finding no opportunity to do so in Washington, wrote to the General, after his return to Philadelphia, a very long letter, in which he detailed all the charges he had heard against Mrs. Eaton. He informed the President that she had borne a bad reputation in Washington from her girlhood ; that the ladies of Washington would not speak to her ; that a gentleman, at the table of Gadsby's Hotel, was said to have declared that he personally knew her to be a dissolute woman ; that Mrs. Eaton had told her servants to call her children Eaton, not Timberlake, for Eaton was their rightful name ; that a clergyman of Washington had told Dr. Ely, that a deceased physician had told him, that Mrs. Timberlake had had a miscarriage when her husband had been absent a year ; that the friends of Major Eaton had persuaded him to board elsewhere, for the sake of getting him away from Mrs. Timberlake ; that Mrs. Jackson herself had entertained the worst opinion of Mrs. Timberlake ; that Major Eaton and Mrs. Timberlake had traveled together, and recorded their names on hotel registers as man and wife, in New York and elsewhere.

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with her and Mr. Eaton. Now, my dear sir, justice to female character, justice to me, and justice to Mr. Eaton, require that these secret agents in propagating slander should be made known to Mr. Eaton, that he may be enabled to defend the character of his wife against such vile and unprincipled attacks. Would you, my worthy friend, desire me to add the weight and influence of my name, whatever it may be, to assist in crushing Mrs. Eaton, who, I do believe, and have a right to believe, is a much injured woman, and more virtuous than some of her enemies?

"It is due to me to be made acquainted with the names of those bank directors who have dared to throw an imputation on the memory of my departed wife. Men who can be base enough to speak thus of the dead, are not too good *secretly* to slander the living; and they deserve, and no doubt will receive, the scorn of all good men. Mr. Eaton has been known to me for twenty years. His character heretofore, for honesty and morality, has been unblemished; and am I now, for the first time, to change my opinion of him, because of the slanders of this city? We know, *here*, that that none are spared. Even Mrs. Madison was assailed by these fiends in human shape. Mrs. Commodore —— has also been singled out as a victim to be sacrificed on the altar of defamation, because she left this city and traveled precisely in the way agreed on by Commodore ——, but did not promulgate to the gossips here. I speak advisedly in relation to this matter, for I have seen a letter from Commodore ——, giving an exposé of this whole transaction, justifying his wife's conduct and vindicating her innocence. He expresses a determination, when he returns to this country, to investigate the affair, and punish the defamers of his wife's character; and I sincerely hope he may live to do it, for I am disgusted even to loathing at the licentious and depraved state of society. It needs purifying.

"You were badly advised, my dear sir, when informed 'that Mrs. Jackson, while in Washington, did not fear to put the seal of reprobation on such a character as Mrs. Eaton.' Mrs. Jackson, to the last moment of her life, believed Mrs. Eaton to be an innocent and much injured woman, so far as relates to the tales about her and Mr. Eaton, and none other ever reached her or me. As Mrs. J. has been introduced into this affair, and as she loved truth while living, and she and myself have taken the (illegible) Psalm for our guide, to which I refer you, I will give you a concise history of the information which I and Mrs. Jackson possessed upon this subject. First, let me remark that Major O'Neal is a mason, Mr. Timberlake was a mason, and Mr. Eaton is a mason; therefore, every person who is acquainted with the obligations of masons, must know that Mr. Eaton, as a mason, could not have criminal intercourse with another mason's wife, without being one of the most abandoned of men. The high standing of Mr. Eaton, as a man of moral worth and a mason, gives the lie direct, in my

estimation, to such a charge, and ought to do it, unless the facts of his alleged guilt shall be clearly and unequivocally established, when, should that be the case, he ought and would be spurned with indignation.

"I became acquainted with Major O'Neal in this city before Congress ever sat in it. I never saw him again until 1819, when I visited his house to pay my respects to Mr. Eaton, who in December preceding took his seat in the Senate for the first time. In 1823 I again visited the city in the character of Senator from Tennessee, and took lodging with Mr. Eaton at Major O'Neal's, when and where I became acquainted with Mr. and Mrs. Timberlake. I was there when Mr. Timberlake left this country for the Mediterranean, and was present when he took leave of his wife, children, and family. He parted with them in the most affectionate manner, as he did also with myself and Mr. Eaton. Between him and the latter gentleman there appeared to be nothing but friendship and confidence from the first time I saw them at Major O'Neal's, until the day of his departure. From the situation and proximity of the rooms we occupied, there could not have been any illicit intercourse between Mr. Eaton and Mrs. Timberlake without my having some knowledge of it; and I assure you, sir, that I saw nothing, heard nothing which was calculated to excite even the slightest suspicion. Shortly after Mr. Timberlake left Washington for the Mediterranean, I was told in great confidence that it was rumored in the city that Mr. Eaton and Mrs. Timberlake were too intimate. I met it, as I meet all slanders, with a prompt denial, and inquired from what source this rumor came, and found it originated with a female, against whom there was as much said as is now said against Mrs. Eaton. This report came to the ear of Mrs. Jackson through the same channel; but to the day of her death she believed it to be a base slander, as I do at this day. As to what servants may have said about her telling them not to call her children Timberlake, but Eaton, it is matter of regret to me that you have named it. My dear sir, if the tales of servants, who become offended by being dismissed, are to be believed, what security has your dear wife for her virtuous character, or that of any other lady?

"It is reported that Mr. Timberlake declared he would never again return to this country, in consequence of Mr. Eaton having seduced his wife. How can such a tale as this be reconciled with the following facts? While now writing, I turn my eyes to the mantel-piece, where I behold a present sent me by Mr. Timberlake of a Turkish pipe, about three weeks before his death, and presented through Mr. Eaton, whom in his letter he calls 'his friend.' Now, sir, could this be so, if he did really believe Mr. Eaton had injured him, or wronged him? No, I am sure you will say it is impossible.

"I have not the least doubt but that every secret rumor is circulated by the minions of Mr. Clay, for the purpose of injuring Mrs. Eaton, and

through her, Mr. Eaton; but I assure you that such conduct shall never have my aid.

"When Mrs. E. visits me (she has not done so since the 4th), I shall treat her with as much politeness as I have ever done, believing her virtuous, at least as much so as the female who first gave rise to the foul tale, and as are many of those who traduce her. As to the determination of the ladies in Washington, I have nothing, nor will I ever have any thing to do with it. I will not persuade or dissuade any of them from visiting Mrs. Eaton, leaving Mrs. Eaton and them to settle the matter in their own way; but I am told that many of the ladies here have waited on her.

"The villain who could have used such an expression at a public table, as has been related to you by Mr. —, of New York, ought to have been instantly kicked from the table, and that Mr. — did not thus treat him, instead of telling you of it, does not elevate him much in my estimation. A man who could be so base and wanton in his conduct would not hesitate to slander the most virtuous female in the country, nay, even the Saviour, were He on earth. With regard to the tale of the clergyman, it seems to me to be so inconsistent with the charities of the Christian religion, and so opposed to the character of an ambassador of Christ, that it gives me pain to read it. Now, my dear friend, why did not this clergyman come himself and tell me this tale, instead of asking you to do it? His not having done so, convinces me that he did not believe it, but was willing, through other sources, to spread the vile slander. If he had been told this by the attending physician himself, he had nothing to fear from giving his name, provided he was a person of responsibility; if he derived it from any other source than the doctor, he himself became a slanderer. The New Testament contains no such uncharitable examples as given by our Saviour while a sojourner on earth. I pray you write this clergyman, and remind him of the precepts contained in the good old book. If he reads it, he will know where to find them.

"I am authorized to say it is untrue that Mr. Eaton ever changed his lodgings, from the first time he went to Major O'Neal's to the present day, except for a few weeks, which was in consequence of his being on several committees much pressed with business, and making it necessary for him, a short time, to be near the Capitol. I should like to know the names of the members of Congress who saw the names of Mr. Eaton and Mrs. Timberlake entered on the tavern register as man and wife, and the date of those entries. If my memory serves me correctly, Mr. Eaton never traveled in company with Mrs. Timberlake but once, and then her husband went along, nor do I believe they went as far as New York; but in this I may be mistaken. But, suppose it to be true, are we to infer guilt from that circumstance? If the owner of the house, or his bar-keeper, were to place upon their register the names of Mr. and Mrs. Eaton,



what would that prove? Why, only that they supposed the lady with him, on his arrival at the inn, was his wife—a mistake, I will venture to say, that often occurs. There is, I expect, about as much truth in this story as the one that informed you, on your arrival at Philadelphia, that Mrs. Eaton was to preside at the President's house, or the one that represented her as intending to visit your city, in company with Major Lewis, to assist in purchasing furniture for the presidential mansion. Now, my dear sir, when such a bare-faced and unfounded misrepresentation as this can meet you in the teeth, I set down all that has been told you as unworthy entirely of credit.

“Major Lewis will go on shortly to see his daughter, at school in Philadelphia, and Mrs. Eaton, for aught I know, may go with him, to purchase furniture for her own house, as I am told she and Mr. Eaton intend keeping house. I suppose she has a right to travel, as well as any other person, if she chooses to do so; and if she desires to go under the protection of Major Lewis, if he nor her husband object, I do not think any other person has a right; but I do not know that she designs going at all—I am inclined to think she does not. Mrs. Eaton has not been in my house since I moved into it, but should she do so, the same attention and respect will be shown to her that are shown to others. On my nieces I lay no restriction. I only enjoin it on them to treat *all* well who may call to see them; they are required to visit none but those they may think proper.

“Permit me now, my dear and highly esteemed friend, to conclude this hasty, and I fear unintelligible scrawl. Whilst on the one hand we should shun base women as a pestilence of the worst and most dangerous kind to society, we ought, on the other, to guard virtuous female character with vestal vigilance. Female virtue is like a tender and delicate flower; let but the breath of suspicion rest upon it, and it withers and perhaps perishes forever. When it shall be assailed by envy and malice, the good and the pious will maintain its purity and innocence, until guilt is made manifest—not by *rumors* and *suspensions*, but by facts and proofs brought forth and sustained by respectable and fearless witnesses in the face of day. Truth shuns not the light; but falsehood deals in sly and dark insinuations, and prefers *darkness*, because its deeds are evil. The Psalmist says, ‘The liar’s tongue we ever hate, and banish from our sight.’

“Your friend,                      ANDREW JACKSON.”

Dr. Ely promptly replied to this formidable letter. He was glad to learn, he said, that the President was so sure of Mrs. Eaton's innocence, and expressed a hope, that if she had done wrong in past times, she would now be restored by repentance to the esteem of the virtuous. Dr. Ely was, evi-



dently, not quite convinced of Mrs. Eaton's immaculate purity. The President hastened to renew his efforts in her defense. He wrote again to his reverend friend.

GENERAL JACKSON TO REV. DR. ELY.

“ WASHINGTON CITY, April 10, 1829.

“ MY DEAR SIR: I have just received your friendly and frank letter of the 4th instant; and finding that you have been badly advised as to some matters on the subject under consideration, I am induced once more to write you. And first I must remark, that I have always thought *repentance* presupposes the existence of *crime*, and should have been gratified had you pointed to the proof of Mrs. Eaton's criminality before you recommended repentance.

“ In your letter you say you had been assured by a gallant man that the rumors of which you speak, had been communicated to Mrs. Eaton and myself. This is not true, unless in *confidence*, or the information having been given by a lady, as stated to you in my last letter. If I am right in my conjectures as to the gallant man alluded to, he never did see any thing criminal in Mrs. Eaton, as he has always positively assured me; and the rebuff this *gallant gentleman* would have met with, if he had related it, would have convinced you that Mrs. Timberlake was not of such *easy* virtue. From that time to the present period they have been unfriendly. I think I well know the gentleman alluded to, and if I am not mistaken, although I entertain a high opinion of him, yet I do know there is no man whose prejudices run higher.

“ I will relate a circumstance which has lately occurred, and then you can judge whether attempts have not been made to destroy Mrs. Eaton's character upon mere rumor, *unfounded* and under *secrecy*. Soon after General Call returned from Philadelphia he communicated to me that he had received, *confidentially*, from a *high-minded, honorable man*, ‘ information of a correspondence in writing between Mr. Eaton and Mr. Timberlake, which fixed on Mr. and Mrs. Eaton positive criminality—and that he had seen it.’ I replied, as I always had done to the General, that this was a positive and unfounded slander, and that he ought to give up the name of such a *villain*; for, said I, pointing to the tobacco-pouch, ‘ *that*, with the note which accompanied it, is my evidence that Mr. Timberlake had the utmost confidence in Mr. Eaton to the day of his death.’ I insisted that it was due to Mr. Eaton to give him the name of this man, as he was determined to have justice done himself and lady. But, as has always been the case, the name of this man could not be had, *it was in confidence*. It is thus, my dear sir, this and all other slanders are circulated and promoted.

“ I have since obtained a power of attorney (from Timberlake to Eaton),

a copy of which I enclose you. Besides this, there are letters of a more recent date, expressive of the highest confidence in Mrs. Eaton and of the most friendly feeling. Yet it has been stated, and *confidently circulated*, that the conduct of Mr. Eaton was the cause of Mr. Timberlake's cutting his throat! Can any man, disposed to do justice and support truth, believe such tales, after reading the enclosed power of attorney and the letters referred to? They afford to my mind the most satisfactory evidence of the entire confidence reposed in Mr. Eaton by Mr. Timberlake up to the period of his death. Instead of communicating these slanderous tales to Mr. Eaton, they are concealed under the *pledges of confidence* by those who *profess* friendship for him. I do not wish to be understood as saying that these reports have never reached his ear, but I *do say*, that no one, so far as I am advised, has ever said to him, that *such a gentleman of high standing* has taken upon himself the responsibility of charging either Mr. or Mrs. Eaton with any act of *criminality* or even *impropriety*. I am sure our friend General Call has not, but to me he has *said* such rumors were in circulation, and when investigated were traced to the female alluded to in my last letter. In all General Call's conversations with me, and they have been frequent and *confidential*, he never did intimate any knowledge of Mrs. Eaton which was calculated, in my opinion, to cast even a shade of suspicion on her virtue. The very act which gave rise to his suspicions was one which, in my judgment, should have given him a more exalted opinion of her chastity.

"Mr. Eaton has very recently understood that the wives of two gentlemen in this city, have been speaking disrespectfully of himself and Mrs. Eaton, and he has, as it has been intimated to me, with promptness attended to the matter, and I doubt not that their lips will be hermetically sealed for the future. I have often reflected upon myself with some severity for ever having received, confidentially, any communication prejudicial to the character and standing of Mr. Eaton. I have known him for twenty years, without a speck upon his moral character, and my friend General Call has always united with me, in expressions of his great moral worth. I would then ask you, if such confidence existed between Mr. Eaton and Mr. Timberlake, to the day of the death of the latter, as is conclusively shown by the enclosed power of attorney, and the other evidence referred to, would not Mr. Eaton have been the basest man on earth, to have violated his confidence, and severed the ties that exist between masons? His general character forbids the idea, and his having taken her as his wife, is conclusive to my mind that he knew her to be virtuous. If he had been base enough to violate the confidence reposed in him by her husband, and to burst the bonds of masonry, he would have left her in disgrace and misery, instead of taking an object so *vile* and so *loathsome* to his bosom. Permit me now to say to you, in the language of sincerity, that I do not

believe there is a being, worthy of belief, that can or will dare to state a *single fact*, going to show criminality or a want of virtue in her. Why, then, will not these secret slanderers, if they believe what they propagate, and have the proof—why not come out boldly, and like men armed with truth, be responsible for what they are daily in the habit of *secretly* and *confidentially* circulating? Truth fears not the open day, but falsehood and *vile slander* delight in darkness, and under the garb of friendship and in the name of *confidence*, circulate their poison.

“I question very much if any one ever told Mr. Eaton more than that rumors were afloat injurious to his character, until lately. No individuals were ever pointed out as speaking disrespectfully of Mr. Eaton and his wife, except the two ladies mentioned above; and from my knowledge of the man, I feel confident, that so soon as he can trace these slanders to *any responsible* source, he will make the individual responsible to him, be he who he may. I know he has been most cruelly treated by two men, who, to his face, have been always most friendly; and yet by innuendoes behind his back, have added to these slanders.

“The opinion I had of Mrs. Commodore — when I last wrote you, I still entertain. After reading Commodore —’s letter to Mr. Skinner of Baltimore, I could not give credence to the reports which had been circulated about her, and my belief of her innocence has since been strengthened by corroborating statements made to me here. If her father is really wealthy, as is stated to be the case by you, he is unworthy of confidence; for in an application which he has made to me for office, he assures me it is made in consequence of his poverty! Again you say, ‘if the Commodore would furnish the authors of the rumors against his wife he must begin with her own father,’ etc. Now, permit me to say that unless you have it from Mr. —’s own lips, you ought not to believe *he* has been instrumental in circulating these rumors about his daughter. I have received a letter from him, in his own hand writing, in which he speaks in the most indignant manner of the authors of the slanders against his child, and solemnly declares his firm conviction of her innocence.

“I have been thus explicit, my dear sir, knowing that you love the truth, but believing that you have opened your ear to tales which, if I judge rightly of the high character you allude to, should never have been repeated to you; for he has either acted treacherously to me, or told you of things which have no existence. In short, he has told me himself that he never did see any act of Mrs. Eaton which was improper, though he believed her a thoughtless, volatile woman. I have written to the gentleman, informing him of the power of attorney, the letters, etc., etc., referred to above. From this evidence of confidence on the part of Mr. Timberlake in Mr. Eaton, I ask, can you believe such tales, without some direct and positive proof of criminality, and that, too, from the lips of in-

dividuals whose standing in society entitled them to credit? Where is the witness who has thus come forth in substantiation of these slanderous charges? None has yet done so, nor do I believe any will; for I believe the reports are entirely destitute of foundation.

"It puts me in mind (if I may be permitted to refer to the circumstance by way of illustration) of a tale circulated here the other day, to wit, 'that I was seized with spasms in the stomach, which would have occasioned my *instant death*, but for the immediate assistance of Dr. Henderson, who was at hand and saved me.' This was asserted to be an indubitable fact, and from the lips of Dr. Henderson himself. Now, my worthy friend, the truth is, I had no spasms, nor had I ever seen or heard of Dr. Henderson before, to the best of my recollection. But still the tale was told, and confidently believed to be true. It was repeated in the presence and hearing of my friend, Mrs. Love, who promptly contradicted it; but she was met with the reply, 'I have it from the mouth of Dr. Henderson himself; it must be true.' Thus it is with most of the tales, rumors, and surmises, which are put in circulation by the gossips of the world. Unless I am greatly mistaken, when all the facts and circumstances connected with this attempt to destroy Mr. Eaton, and blast the reputation of his wife, are brought to light, it will be found, in point of malignity and wickedness, to have few parallel cases.

"Please present me most kindly to your amiable wife, and believe me to be sincerely your friend,

ANDREW JACKSON."

These letters convey but a faint idea of the interest felt by General Jackson in the vindication of the lady. He sent a gentleman to New York to investigate the hotel-register story. He wrote so many letters and statements in relation to this business that Major Lewis was worn out with the nightly toil of copying. The entire mass of the secret and confidential writings relating to Mrs. Eaton, all dated in the summer and autumn of 1829, and most of them originally in General Jackson's hand, would fill about eighty-five of these pages. And besides these, there was a large number of papers and documents not deemed important enough for preservation. To show the zeal and energy of General Jackson in the defense of a friend, I will append a catalogue of the papers preserved:

1. Letter of Dr. Ely to the President, stating the rumors.
2. The President's reply, given above.
3. Dr. Ely to the

President. 4. The President's second letter to Dr. Ely, given above. 5. Copy of purser Timberlake's power of attorney to Major Eaton. 6. A large batch of certificates by Timberlake's shipmates, showing that the purser had always spoken most affectionately of his wife and children, and had cut his throat in a fit of gloom, caused by dissipation on shore. 7. Dr. Ely to the President ; says he is going to New York to inquire into the conduct of the lady there. 8. Dr. Ely to the President ; says he has been to New York, and there is no truth in the stories. 9. Rev. J. N. Campbell to the President ; begs him not to throw the weight of his great influence against him in his difference with Major Eaton. 10. The President to Rev. J. N. Campbell ; says he will not. 11. Rev. J. N. Campbell to the President ; he is glad to hear it. 12. A narrative by the President, duly signed and attested, of an interview between himself and the Rev. J. N. Campbell, which narrative the reader shall have the pleasure of perusing. 13. A finishing letter from the President to the Rev. J. N. Campbell. 16. Fifteen certificates of Mrs. Eaton's good character, addressed to the President, in reply to inquiries by him. 17. A correspondence between Major Eaton and the Rev. J. N. Campbell.

All this, and much more, in the first months of a new administration ! General Jackson, indeed, made the cause his own, and brought to the defense of Mrs. Eaton all the fire and resolution with which, forty years before, he had silenced every whisper against Mrs. Jackson. He considered the cases of the two ladies parallel. His zeal in behalf of Mrs. Eaton was a manifestation or consequence of his wrath against the calumniators of his wife.

The General was so urgent in demanding of Dr. Ely the names of the persons who had spoken ill of Mrs. Eaton, that the doctor wrote, at length, to Mr. Campbell, advising him to call upon the President, and tell him all he knew. Mr. Campbell, in consequence, sought an interview with General Jackson. What transpired on this occasion the General deemed so important, that he wrote out for preservation a

statement of it, with an account of the proceedings to which the interview led.

NARRATIVE BY GENERAL JACKSON.

"BE IT REMEMBERED, that on Tuesday evening, the 1st of September, 1829, I was in my parlor, when the door-keeper came to, and informed me, that the Reverend Mr. Campbell wanted an interview with me in my office. I went immediately up to my office, where I found Mr. Campbell and Major Donelson. Major Donelson having retired, Mr. Campbell observed, he supposed I knew his business, or the object of his business with me. I assured him that I did not. He then said that he had received a letter from Dr. Ely, which made it proper for him to inform me that he was the Presbyterian preacher or clergyman alluded to in Dr. Ely's letter to me, as having given the information relative to the *tale* of the deceased doctor, upon the subject of the miscarriage of Mrs. Timberlake, now Mrs. Eaton, in the absence of her husband, under circumstances which made it manifest that the child could not be his, as related to me in a letter from Dr. Ely. I was much astonished at this avowal, and replied that it was the first intimation I ever had that he was the Presbyterian clergyman who gave currency, through Dr. Ely, to this *vile tale*, and assured him that I never had the least suspicion of his being the author, and that in passing the subject through my mind, I had done injustice to another, for which I was sorry, although I had never named him to any one.

"Mr. Campbell then read to me part of Dr. Ely's letter, and entered into an explanation of his motives for not having made his communication directly to me. He said he knew Dr. Ely was my friend, and he wished me to be informed of those charges against Mrs. Eaton before I appointed Major Eaton a member of my Cabinet; that he had enjoined on Mr. Ely secrecy; that he considered it confidential, and charged him, that if he did not give it to my own ear, not to lisp it to any one. It was upon this condition alone that Mr. Ely was authorized to give up his name to me. He complained that Dr. Ely had not treated him well in communicating the information to others, and particularly to Mrs. Eaton.

To which I replied, I regretted that either he or Dr. Ely had not come directly to me with the *tale*, before Dr. Ely left Washington. If they had done so, I told him, I could easily have shown them the falsehood of some of the charges contained in Dr. Ely's letter to me, and would have pointed out to them some of the unhappy consequences that must now inevitably take place. I told him that I never had heard of this *tale*, circulated as coming from a dead doctor, before I read it in Dr. Ely's letter; that I was surprised Dr. Ely had not told him he had advised me in a confidential note, the Saturday before he left Washington, not to be drawn

from my determination of appointing Mr. Eaton a member of my Cabinet, as his talents and my confidence in him made it necessary for me to have him near me. This I had determined on, and when next I saw him, told him that I could not be shaken in my purpose; that Major Eaton came into my Cabinet by my persuasion, and not from his own choice; that I knew him intimately for twenty years and upward, and believed his moral character to be without a blot.

“ Mr. Campbell then detailed the information derived from this dead doctor, whom he called by the name of Craven.

“ The manner of his relating the circumstances drew my particular attention, and I observed to him, as soon as he had gotten through, that this dead doctor *tale* was to me, in itself, incredible. As related by Mr. Campbell it is substantially as follows:—‘ The doctor told him that he had been called to Mrs. Timberlake as a physician, in consequence of her having been thrown from her carriage and much hurt; that when he entered the room where Mrs. Timberlake and an old woman were, they broke out into a loud laugh, and told him he was too late—that Mrs. Timberlake had miscarried, and he had lost his job; that Mr. Timberlake had been so long absent from home, that it was well known that the infant could not have been his.’

“ I drew Mr. Campbell’s attention to the absurdity of this story as related, and asked him if he had ever thought of the dilemma in which the dead doctor would be placed for *telling* such a *tale*, and he for believing and reporting it. I asked him if he did not know that doctors were prohibited by law from revealing the secrets of a sick bed, and if he did not suppose this doctor would be considered a base man and unworthy of credit, the moment this story was presented to the public. I told him the honorable, moral, and religious part of the community would have no confidence in the representations of such a man, and that he would be held responsible for it, inasmuch as he had avowed himself the author of its circulation.

“ Mr. Campbell then observed, he believed that he (the doctor) had stated that he accidentally happened in, and had not been sent for as a physician.

“ I told Mr. Campbell it was still more absurd to suppose that a married woman, so long absent from her husband that every one must know the child could not be his, would so wantonly publish her own disgrace and infamy to the world, when she had no need of a physician in her private chamber. This version of the story, I observed to him, was too absurd and ridiculous, as well as inconsistent with every principle and feeling of human nature, to be believed even by the most *credulous*; and that I was astonished a man of his good sense could, for one moment, give credence to it, and particularly as it involved the character of a lady.



I then inquired of Mr. Campbell what date the dead doctor had given to this transaction—the date being important.

“He replied, in 1821.

“I asked him if he was aware of the situation he would be placed in if, on inquiry, it should appear that Mr. Timberlake was in this country, and never out of it in 1821. I told him I was under the impression that it would so appear, whenever examined into; that I was induced to believe he had not been absent from the United States from the close of the war until 1824; that I had understood he was detained here prosecuting a claim against the government for property thrown overboard by Commodore Decatur previous to the capture of the frigate *President*. Having lost his vouchers, he was unable to settle his accounts, and, therefore, being considered a defaulter, could not get public employment.

“Mr. Campbell replied that Mr. Timberlake, from the information of the Doctor, must have been absent in that year.

“I answered it was my opinion he would find himself mistaken, and it would be well for him to make inquiry, and as a Christian and preacher of the Gospel, it would be his duty, if he found he had been mistaken in this information, to repair the injury he had done female character by saying to Mrs. Eaton, and to the world, that on inquiry he found there was no truth in the tale of his dead Doctor. Justice and Christianity, I told him, demanded this of him.

“After some further conversation on the subject of Mrs. Timberlake visiting his family, and the visit being returned, and that a friendly intercourse was kept up between the two families, until Dr. Craven gave him the information relative to the abortion, when all intercourse ceased, I asked Mr. Campbell why he did not, when he received this information, and before he terminated the friendly relation which had subsisted between his family and Mrs. Timberlake, go to her and inform her of this *vile tale*, and the name of the person from whom he had received it, and say to her that she must remove this stain upon her character, or all intercourse between them must cease. This, I told him, was what I thought he, as a Christian, ought to have done, pursuing the golden rule of doing to others as we would they should do unto us. This would have given her an opportunity of showing her innocence, or, if she failed, then, with a clear conscience, he and his family could have withdrawn from her society.

“The date having been given by Mr. Campbell, as stated by the dead doctor, it being an important fact by which to judge of the truth or falsehood of this *story*, I at once determined to have inquiry made as to where Mr. Timberlake was in all the year 1821; and while ruminating on this subject, Major W. B. Lewis came into my office and inquired relative to Mr. Campbell's business with me (he having been in the parlor below when the doorkeeper told me the Rev. Mr. Campbell wished to have a



private interview with me). I told him Mr. Campbell came to avow himself to be the clergyman alluded to in Dr. Ely's letter to me, who had informed him (Ely) of the reported miscarriage of Mrs. Timberlake, when it was well known the child could not be her husband's, in consequence of his long absence from the country; and that Mr. Campbell had affixed to this transaction a date—1821. This, I observed, was tangible, and by it the truth or falsehood of the tale might be tested. I requested Major Lewis to ascertain, if it was practicable to do so, where Mr. Timberlake was in all that year, assuring him that I was convinced, in my own mind, and had so said to Mr. Campbell, that Mr. Timberlake was here during the whole year 1821; that I had never heard of his leaving the United States until the spring of 1824; that I had seen him at Mr. O'Neal's in the winter of 1823 and 1824, and was there when he took leave of his family, preparatory to a cruise up the Mediterranean.

“On the evening of the 2nd of September, instant, Major Lewis informed me that he had made the inquiry, as requested by me, and had learned that Mr. Timberlake was a merchant in this city about that time, and that his books were now in the possession of Mrs. Eaton, which, if looked into, would in all probability show where he was during the year 1821. I resolved to go and examine the books myself, and on the same evening—2nd September—I accordingly went up to Major Eaton's.

“On entering the parlor, I found no one there but John Henderson, Major Eaton's nephew, who informed me that his uncle was up stairs with his aunt, who was very sick. I desired him to go up and request his uncle to come below, as I wanted to see him. Major Eaton came down and invited me to walk up and see Mrs. Eaton. I did so, and found her very ill and in bed. After a short conversation with her, and being informed of an interview had with Mr. Campbell on that day, I asked Mrs. Eaton if she had the mercantile books of Mr. Timberlake in her possession. She said she had. I desired to know if she would permit me to see them. She said not only me, but any one. I then went down stairs to the parlor, where the books were brought to me, and I examined them. I soon found from entries—said to be in the handwriting of Mr. Timberlake—that he was in this country and in this city throughout the year 1821. Before leaving Major Eaton's, I took extracts from the books of Dr. Sim's and Major O'Neal's accounts, to show Mr. Campbell, and to prove to him that Mr. Timberlake must have been here in that year, and as late as February, 1822, as the entries were made in his own handwriting.

“I was convinced in my own mind that on exhibiting this proof to Mr. Campbell, he would at once see the cruelty of this charge, as made by his dead doctor, and the injustice done Mrs. Eaton, and would so declare to Mrs. Eaton and all others. I, therefore, on my return home, requested Major Donelson to wait upon Mr. Campbell, and having heard that Col.

Towson, by request of Mr. Campbell, was present at the interview between the latter gentleman and Major Eaton and his lady, on the 2d instant, I desired Major Donelson to request the Colonel to accompany Mr. Campbell and be present at the interview I wished to have with him.

"Agreeably to my request, the Rev. Mr. Campbell called at my office on the morning of the 3d inst., when an interview was had in the presence of Col. Towson and Major Donelson. After stating to Mr. Campbell and Col. Towson the reason which had induced me to request this meeting, it being in consequence of a conversation had with Mr. Campbell, at his own request, on the 1st inst., I stated the result of my inquiry as to the fact where Mr. Timberlake was in the year 1821, and having the proof in my hand, observed that it evidenced, beyond all contradiction, that the tale of the dead doctor could not be true. I further observed that if any doubts existed as to the entries being in the handwriting of Mr. Timberlake, the books could be seen, and that fact clearly ascertained.

"Mr. Campbell then said, I must have misunderstood him as to the date.

"I replied, I could not ; he must recollect, at the time he made the statement, how earnestly I brought to his view the dilemma in which he would be placed if, at the date given to this transaction, Mr. Timberlake should be proved to be in this country. Notwithstanding this, he (then) still persisted in the declaration of Mr. Timberlake's absence in that year.

"He, however, now maintained that I had mistaken him as to the date.

"I again told him as positively *I had not*. I then asked him to give a date to the transaction, if it was not in 1821. He refused. I replied, that the date being all important, for on this depended the innocence or guilt of the lady, I requested that he would give to it a date. He did not and would not. After taking out some papers, and looking over them, he said Mr. Timberlake was absent, from his memoranda, in the autumn of 1822.

"I observed to him that there was neither justice nor Christianity in making a charge which goes to the destruction of female character, without affixing to it a date, by which truth or falsehood could be tested. Still, however, Mr. Campbell, in his last interview, positively refused to give a date, although in his first he had given 1821, and insisted that Mr. Timberlake must have been absent. Col. Towson and Major Donelson being present, their written statement is referred to as explanatory of what was further said at this interview—being on the 3d instant.

"I will barely add, in conclusion, that Mr. Campbell stated he had employed Mr. Key as counsel, who had told him his proof was sufficient. He further said his statement would be corroborated by the evidence of the mother and wife of Dr. Craven. I cautioned him not to be too san-

guine with regard to his proofs. He said that he and Col. Towson had seen the mother and wife of Dr. Craven that morning, etc., etc.

"This statement is made from memoranda in writing, taken immediately after the conversation took place, from day to day; and although the very words may not be given, I am certain the whole, as far as I have attempted to state the conversation, is substantially correct.

"ANDREW JACKSON."

"September 3d, 1829."

"P. S.—I requested Mr. Campbell to explain his motives in coming to me to avow himself as the author of this secret slander against Mrs. Eaton; but this he failed satisfactorily to do. It was well known that I had been long and intimately acquainted with Major Eaton, knew his worth, and was satisfied that a blemish did not rest upon his moral character. Why he did not go to Mr. Eaton with it, who was here, I can not tell. He was the person who should have been informed of this slander, and especially as both Mr. Campbell and Dr. Ely acknowledged to me in the presence of my cabinet, Mr. Van Buren, Mr. Ingham, Mr. Branch, Mr. Barry, and Mr. Berrian, and also Major Lewis and Major Donelson, that they entirely acquitted Major Eaton of the charge of improper or criminal conduct.

"Why this persecution of Mrs. Eaton—the motives which induced to such conduct—I leave to the decision of the moral and Christian world. Mrs. Eaton is the wife of Major Eaton, which is the strongest evidence he can give in her virtue. Does Mr. Campbell wish to separate man and wife by his false tales? Surely this is not the doctrine taught by our Saviour, and which, if he reads his Bible, he may find in every page of that sacred book.

"ANDREW JACKSON."

The postscript to General Jackson's statement was evidently added some days after the date affixed to the body of the narrative, because the postscript alludes to a cabinet council held on the 10th of September. This council the President invited Mr. Campbell to attend in the following letter:

GENERAL JACKSON TO REV. J. N. CAMPBELL.

"WASHINGTON, September 10th, 1829.

"DEAR SIR: After our interview in the presence of Colonel Towson and Major Donelson, Mr. Key sought one with me, in which he submitted certain propositions as the basis of an accommodation of the existing difficulty between yourself and Major Eaton, the result of which was nothing

more than an agreement to suspend any further action upon the subject until the arrival of Mr. Ely, who was to be requested to visit this place immediately.

"Mr. Ely has since arrived, but I do not perceive, notwithstanding your failure as far as I am informed, to sustain the charge against Mrs. Eaton's character, that you are disposed to make those acknowledgments which, it occurs to me, an ambassador of Christ ought, on such an occasion, to make. This being the fact, and judging from your letter of the 5th, and from insinuations made to me by Mr. Ely in regard to the supposed reluctance of certain clerks to testify in the case, that my relation to it has been or may be misconceived, I have determined to call my Cabinet together this evening at 7 o'clock, when I have asked Mr. Ely to attend, and will be happy also if you will, for the purpose of disclosing to them what has happened; so that whatever may be the course of the affair hereafter, no misunderstanding of my motives and agency in it, therefore, may exist.

"Having ever entertained the highest regard for the moral character of Mr. Eaton, I brought him into my Cabinet, with the fullest persuasion that the cause of virtue and religion, which it has been my pride through life to support, would be benefited by it. I wanted no information to satisfy me of the purity of his character. As my friend, years of intimacy and experience with him, supplied the most abundant evidence of it; but a different sentiment, entertained by others, has been obtruded upon me, in a manner which, I must say, invariably excited my distrust of its sincerity. In this I may be wrong, but the golden rule which requires us to do to others what we would have others do to us, seems to me so plainly to have required that the cause of such a sentiment should have first been communicated to Mr. Eaton, that I can not yet give up this distrust.

"It can only be removed by the complete establishment of the fact upon which they have been supposed to rest their belief of his criminal intercourse with Mrs. Timberlake, and until this is done, justice to her, to myself, and the country, requires that after the proposed council with my Cabinet, I should hold no future conversation with yourself or any one else, in relation to this subject. Your obedient servant,

"ANDREW JACKSON."\*

What occurred at the meeting of the Cabinet in the evening, General Jackson did not think proper to have recorded. From other sources I learn some particulars.

The members of the Cabinet, Dr. Ely, and Mr. Campbell being assembled, the President opened the proceedings with

\* All these documents are from the MSS. of Major Wm. B. Lewis.

an address upon the meanness of calumny, and concluded by giving an account of the late investigations. The dispute between himself and Mr. Campbell upon the date of the alleged miscarriage was renewed with much acrimony. Mr. Campbell declared that he had not intended to give the year 1821 as the precise date of Dr. Craven's story. He had seen, that very morning, the widow and the daughter of Dr. Craven, who both confirmed his previous statement, and agreed that 1826 was the year when the damning event occurred. The President still insisted that Mr. Campbell had irrevocably committed himself to the year 1821. He further declared that Dr. Craven's wife and daughter had given two versions of the "dead-doctor tale," which were irreconcilable. The President would not hear Mr. Campbell further on that point. He had originally said 1821, and by 1821 he must abide.

The President then turned to the other charges. "As to the allegation," said he, "that Mrs. Jackson had an unfavorable opinion of Mrs. Timberlake, I declare of my own knowledge that it is false." The charge that Major Eaton and Mrs. Timberlake passed the night together in a New York hotel dwindled first, said the President, into a story that they had been seen on a bed together, and, afterward, that they had been seen sitting on a bed together. He called upon Dr. Ely to state the result of his inquiries in New York.

The reverend gentleman told his story, and concluded by saying that there was no evidence to convict Major Eaton of improper conduct.

"Nor Mrs. Eaton either," broke in the President.

"On that point," said the Doctor, "I would rather not give an opinion."

"She is as chaste as a virgin !" exclaimed the President.

When Dr. Ely had finished his narrative, Mr. Campbell asked to be allowed to say a few words in his own justification. He declared that, in all that he had done, his object had been to save the administration of General Jackson from reproach, and the morals of the country from contamination. He had communicated nothing to the opponents of the ad-

ministration. He conceived that the evidence which had been elicited justified him in the course he had deemed it right to pursue.

As he was proceeding to remark upon the evidence, General Jackson interrupted him with marked asperity of manner, saying that he had been summoned thither to *give* evidence, not discuss it.

Mr. Campbell then said: "I perceive that I have mistaken the object of the invitation to come here; that it was not to give me an opportunity of saying any thing in my justification. I have therefore only to say, that I stand ready to prove, in a court of justice, all I have said, and more than I have said, or would have dared to say three days ago."

He then bowed to the council and retired. The council broke up soon after, and the President deemed Mrs. Eaton a vindicated woman. It is needless to say, that the church over which the Rev. Mr. Campbell presided was no longer favored with the attendance of the President of the United States.

Whether the efforts of the President had or had not the effect of convincing the ladies of Washington that Mrs. Eaton was worthy of admission into their circle, shall in due time be related. Upon a point of that nature ladies are not convinced easily. Meanwhile, the suitors for presidential favor are advised to make themselves visible at the lady's receptions. A card in Mrs. Eaton's card basket, is not unlikely to be a winning card.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

## TERROR AMONG THE OFFICE-HOLDERS.

CONSTITUTION makers do all they can to support the weakness of human virtue when subjected to the temptations of power and place. But virtue can not be dispensed with in this world. No system of "checks and balances" can be made so perfect but that much must be left, after all, to the honor of governing persons.

Among the powers entrusted to the honor of presidents of the United States was the dread power of removing from office, without trial or notice, the civil employees of the government. In the army and navy, no officer can be cashiered, no private dismissed, without trial—without being heard in his defense. In the civil service of the country, every man holds his place at the will of the head of government.

This fearful power over the fortunes of individuals and the happiness of families, is held, necessarily, in our present imperfect civilization, by a large number of persons in private life; and it is one of the ten thousand proofs of the inherent loving-kindness of human nature, that this power is generally exercised with a considerable regard for the feelings, the necessities, and the rights of the employed. The claim of old servants to indulgence and protection is almost universally recognized. The right of a person about to be dismissed from an employment to as long a notice of dismissal beforehand as can be conveniently given, few persons are unfeeling enough to deny. The good policy of holding out to the faithful employée the prospect of a permanent retention of his place, and his promotion, by and by, to a better, no one but a politician has been foolish enough to question.

It does not appear to have occurred to the gentlemen who formed the Constitution under which we live, that there could ever be a President of the United States who would abuse the power of removal. His own responsibility for the conduct

of those whom he appointed was supposed to be sufficient to make him careful to appoint the right men to the right places ; and his feelings, as a man and a gentleman, were deemed an adequate protection to those right men in their right places.

It is delightful to observe with what a scrupulous conscientiousness the early Presidents of this republic disposed of the places in their gift. Washington set a noble example. He demanded to be satisfied on three points with regard to an applicant for office : Is he honest ? Is he capable ? Has he the confidence of his fellow-citizens ? Not till these questions were satisfactorily answered did he deign to inquire respecting the political opinions of a candidate. Private friendship between the President and an applicant was absolutely an obstacle to his appointment, so fearful was the President of being swayed by private motives. “ My friend,” he says, in one of his letters, “ I receive with cordial welcome. He is welcome to my house, and welcome to my heart ; but with all his good qualities he is not a man of business. His opponent, with all his politics so hostile to me, *is* a man of business. My private feelings have nothing to do in the case. I am not George Washington, but President of the United States. As George Washington, I would do this man any kindness in my power—as President of the United States, I can do nothing.”

There spoke the man who was a GENTLEMAN to the core of his heart.

If General Washington would not appoint a friend because he was a friend, nor a partisan because he was a partisan, still less was he capable of removing an enemy because he was an enemy, or an opponent because he was an opponent. During his administration of eight years, he removed nine persons from office ; namely, six unimportant collectors, one district surveyor, one vice-consul, and one foreign minister. We all know that he recalled Mr. Pinckney from Paris because that conservative gentleman was offensive to the



French Directory. The other dismissals were all "for cause." Politics had nothing to do with one of them.

The example of General Washington was followed by his successors. John Adams doubted, even, whether it was strictly proper for him to retain his son in a foreign employment to which President Washington had appointed him. He removed nine subordinate officers during his presidency; but none for political opinion's sake. Jefferson, owing to peculiar circumstances well known to readers of history, removed thirty-nine persons; but he himself repeatedly and solemnly declared, that not one of them was removed because he belonged to the party opposed to his own. The contrary imputation he regarded in the light of a calumny, and refuted it as such. In one respect Mr. Jefferson was even over scrupulous. He would not appoint any man to office, however meritorious, who was a relative of his own. Mr. Madison made five removals; Mr. Monroe, nine; Mr. John Quincy Adams, two. Mr. Calhoun tells us,\* that during the seven years that he held the office of Secretary of War only two of his civil subordinates were removed, both for improper conduct. In both cases, he adds, the charges were investigated in the presence of the accused, and "the officers were not dismissed until after full investigation, and the reason of dismission reduced to writing and communicated to them."† Colonel McKenney mentions, in his "Memoirs," that when a vacancy occurred in one of the departments, the chief of that department would inquire among his friends for "a qualified" person to fill it.

Nor was this scrupulousness due to any lack of aspirants for governmental employment. Mr. John Quincy Adams says, in one of his letters, that he was tormented with ceaseless, with daily applications for office. In the last year of

\* Works of John C. Calhoun, ii., 439.

† "Napoleon was a despot, it is said; yet he never dismissed any one from public office without an inquiry and report of facts, and rarely ever without hearing the accused functionary: never when the questions involved were civil or administrative."—*Napoleonic Ideas*. By Louis Napoleon.

Mr. Monroe's presidency, when the fourth auditorship of the treasury fell vacant, there were, among the army of applicants for the place, five United States Senators and thirty members of the House of Representatives!\*

Up to the hour of the delivery of General Jackson's inaugural address, it was supposed that the new President would act upon the principles of his predecessors. In his Monroe letters he had taken strong ground against partisan appointments, and when he resigned his seat in the Senate he had advocated two amendments to the constitution designed to limit and purify the exercise of the appointing power. One of these proposed amendments forbade the reelection of a President, and the other the appointment of members of Congress to any office not judicial.

The sun had not gone down upon the day of his inauguration before it was known in all official circles in Washington that the "reform" alluded to in the inaugural address meant a removal from office of all who had conspicuously opposed, and an appointment to office of those who had conspicuously aided the election of the new President. The work was promptly begun. Figures are not important here, and the figures relating to this matter have been disputed. Some have declared that during the first year of the presidency of General Jackson two thousand persons in the civil employment of the government were removed from office, and two thousand partisans of the President appointed in their stead. This statement has been denied. It can not be denied that in the first month of this administration more removals were made than had occurred from the foundation of the government to that time. It can not be denied that the principle was now acted upon that partisan services should be rewarded by public office, though it involved the removal from office of competent and faithful incumbents. Col. Benton will not be suspected of overstating the facts respecting the removals, but he admits that their number.

\* N. Y. American, April 3, 1824.

during this year, 1829, was six hundred and ninety. He expresses himself on this subject with less than his usual directness. His estimate of six hundred and ninety does not include the little army of clerks and others who were at the disposal of some of the six hundred and ninety. The estimate of two thousand includes all who lost their places in consequence of General Jackson's accession to power; and, though the exact number can not be ascertained, I presume it was not less than two thousand. Col. Benton says that of the eight thousand postmasters, only four hundred and ninety-one were removed; but he does not add, as he might have added, that the four hundred and ninety-one vacated places comprised nearly all in the department that were worth having. Nor does he mention that the removal of the postmasters of half a dozen great cities was equivalent to the removal of many hundreds of clerks, book-keepers, and carriers.

General Harrison, who had courteously censured General Jackson's course in the Seminole war, who had warmly defended his friend, Henry Clay, against the charge of bargain and corruption, was recalled from Colombia just four days after General Jackson had acquired the power to recall him. General Harrison had only resided in Colombia a few weeks when he received the news of his recall. A Kentuckian, who was particularly inimical to Mr. Clay, was sent out to take his place.

The appointment of a soldier so distinguished as General Harrison to represent the United States in the infant republic of Colombia was regarded by the Colombians as a great honor done them, and an emphatic recognition of their disputed claim to a place among the nations. A purer patriot, a worthier gentleman, than General William Henry Harrison, has not adorned the public service of his country. His singular merits as a scholar, as a man of honor, as a soldier, and as a statesman, were only obscured by the calumny and eulogium incident to a presidential campaign. My studies of

the Indian affairs of the country have given me the highest idea of his valor, skill, and humanity.

Samuel Swartwout was among the expectants at Washington—an easy, good-natured man ; most inexact and even reckless in the management of business ; the last man in the whole world to be intrusted with millions. He had hopes of the collectorship of New York. On the fourteenth of March he wrote from Washington to his friend, Jesse Hoyt, to let him know how he was getting on, and to give Hoyt the benefit of his observations—Hoyt himself being a seeker. “I hold to your doctrine fully,” wrote Swartwout, “that no d——d rascal who made use of his office or its profits for the purpose of keeping Mr. Adams in, and General Jackson out of power, is entitled to the least lenity or mercy, save that of hanging. So we think both alike on that head. Whether or not I shall get any thing in the general scramble for plunder, remains to be proven ; but I rather guess I shall. What it will be is not yet so certain ; perhaps keeper of the Bergen lighthouse. I rather think Massa Pomp stands a smart chance of going somewhere, perhaps to the place you have named, or to the devil. Your man, if you want a place, is Col. Hamilton\*—he being now the second officer in the government of the Union, and in all probability our next President. Make your suit to him, then, and you will get what you want. I know Mr. Ingham slightly, and would recommend you to push like a devil if you expect any thing from that quarter. I can do you no good in any quarter of the world, having mighty little influence beyond Hoboken. The great goers are the new men ; the old troopers being all spavined and ring-boned from previous hard travel. I’ve got the bots, the fet-lock, hip-joint, gravel, halt, and founders ; and I assure you if I can only keep my own legs, I shall do well ; but I’m darned if I can carry any weight with me. When I left home, I thought my nag sound and strong, but the beast is rather broken down here. I’ll tell you more

\* Acting Secretary of State until the arrival of Mr. Van Buren.

about it when I see you in New York. In seriousness, my dear sir, your support must come from Mr. Van Buren and Mr. Col. Hamilton ; I could not help you any more than your clerk.”\*

The President, distracted with the number of applications for the New York collectorship, and extremely fond of the man who had ‘pushed like a devil,’ a quarter of a century before at Richmond, gave Swartwout the place. Upon his return to New York, his proverbial good nature was put to a severe test ; for the applicants for posts in the custom-house met him at every turn, crowded his office, invaded his house, and stuffed his letter-box. There was a general dismissal of Adams men from the New York Custom House, and the new appointments were made solely on the ground that the applicants had aided the election of General Jackson.

Henry Lee was appointed to a remote foreign consulship, a place which he deemed beneath his talents and an inadequate reward for his services. He would have probably obtained a better place but for the fear that the Senate would reject the nomination. The Senate did reject his nomination even to the consulship, and by such a decided majority that nothing could be done for him. Even Colonel Benton voted against him. Lee, I may add, died soon after in Paris, where he wrote part of a history of the emperor Napoleon.

Terror, meanwhile, reigned in Washington. No man knew what the rule was upon which removals were made. No man knew what offenses were reckoned causes of removal, nor whether he had or had not committed the unpardonable sin. The great body of officials awaited their fate in silent horror, glad when the office hours expired at having escaped another day. “The gloom of suspicion,” says Mr. Stansbury, himself an office-holder, “pervaded the face of society. No man deemed it safe and prudent to trust his neighbor, and the interior of the department presented a fearful scene of guarded silence, secret intrigue, espionage, and tale-bearing.

\* Mackenzie's Van Buren, p 197.

A casual remark, dropped in the street, would within an hour, be repeated at head quarters ; and many a man received unceremonious dismissal who could not, for his life, conceive or conjecture wherein he had offended."

At that period, it must be remembered, to be removed from office in the city of Washington was like being driven from the solitary spring in a wide expanse of desert. The public treasury was almost the sole source of emolument. Salaries were small, the expenses of living high, and few of the officials had made provision for engaging in private business or even for removing their families to another city. No one had anticipated a necessity of removal. Clerks, appointed by the early presidents, had grown gray in the service of the government, and were so habituated to the routine of their places, that, if removed, they were beggared and helpless.

An old friend of General Jackson's was in Washington this summer. He wrote on the 4th of July to a friend : "I have seen the President, and have dined with him, but have had no free communication, or conversation with him. The reign of this administration, I wish an other word could be used, is in very strong contrast with the mild and lenient sway of Madison, Monroe, and Adams. To me it feels harsh—it seems to have had an unhappy effect on the free thoughts, and unrestrained speech, which has heretofore prevailed. I question whether the ferreting out treasury rats, and the correction of abuses, are sufficient to compensate for the reign of terror which appears to have commenced. It would be well enough if it were confined to evil-doers, but it spreads abroad like a contagion : spies, informers, denunciations—the fecula of despotism. Where there are listeners there will be tale-bearers. A stranger is warned by his friend on his first arrival to be careful how he expresses himself in relation to any one, or any thing which touches the administration. I had hoped that this would be a national administration—but it is not even an administration of a party. Our republic henceforth, will be governed by factions, and the struggle will be who shall get the offices and their emoluments—a struggle

embittered by the most base and sordid passions of the human heart."

So numerous were the removals in the city of Washington that the business of the place seem paralyzed. In July, a Washington paper said :

"Thirty-three houses which were to have been built this year have, we learn, been stopped, in consequence of the unsettled and uncertain state of things now existing here ; and the merchant can not sell his goods or collect his debts from the same cause. We have never known the city to be in a state like this before, though we have known it for many years. The individual distress, too, produced, in many cases, by the removal of the destitute officers, is harrowing and painful to all who possess the ordinary sympathies of our nature, without regard to party feeling. No man, not absolutely brutal, can be pleased to see his personal friend or neighbor suddenly stripped of the means of support, and cast upon the cold charity of the world without a shelter or a home. Frigid and insensible must be the heart of that man who could witness some of the scenes that have lately been exhibited here, without a tear of compassion or a throb of sympathy. But what is still more to be regretted is, that this system, having been once introduced, must necessarily be kept up at the commencement of every presidential term ; and he who goes into office knowing its limited and uncertain tenure, feels no disposition to make permanent improvements or to form for himself a permanent residence. He, therefore, takes care to lay up what he can, during his brief official existence, to carry off to some more congenial spot, where he means to spend his life, or reënter into business. All, therefore, that he might have expended in city improvements is withdrawn, and the revenue of the corporation, as well as the trade of the city, is so far lessened and decreased. It is obviously a most injurious policy as it respects the interests of our city. Many of the oldest and most respectable citizens of Washington, those who have adhered to its fortunes through all their vicissitudes, who have 'grown with its growth and strengthened with its strength,' have been cast off to make room for strangers who feel no interest in the prosperity of our infant metropolis, and who care not whether it advances or retrogrades."

As an illustration of the state of things in Washington at this time, I will here transcribe the story of Colonel T. L. McKenney, for many years the honest and capable superintendent of Indian affairs, appointed to that office by Mr. Monroe :

"Some time after General Jackson had been inaugurated, the Secretary of War, Major Eaton, inquired of me *if I had been to see the President?* I said I had not. 'Had you not better go over?' 'Why, sir?' I asked—'I have had no official business to call me there, nor have I now; why should I go?' 'You know, in these times,' replied the Secretary, 'it is well to cultivate those personal relations, which will go far toward securing the good will of one in power'—and he wound up by more than intimating that the President had heard some things in disparagement of me; when I determined forthwith to go and see him, and ascertain what they were. On arriving at the door of the President's house, I was answered by the door-keeper that the President was in, and having gone to report me, returned, saying the President would see me. On arriving at the door, it having been thrown open by the door-keeper, I saw the President very busily engaged writing, and with great earnestness; so much so, indeed, that I stood for some time before he took his eyes off the paper, fearing to interrupt him, and not wishing to seem intrusive. Presently he raised his eyes from the paper, and at the same time his spectacles from his nose, and looking at me, said, 'Come in sir, come in.' 'You are engaged, sir?' 'No more so than I always am, and always expect to be,' drawing a long breath, and giving signs of great uneasiness.

"I had just said, 'I am here, sir, at the instance of the Secretary of War,' when the door was thrown open, and three members of Congress entered. They were received with great courtesy. I rose, saying, 'You are engaged, sir: I will call when you are more at leisure;' and bowed myself out. On returning to my office, I addressed a note to the President of the following import: 'Colonel McKenney's respects to the President of the United States, and requests to be informed when it will suit his convenience to see him?' to which Major Donelson replied, 'The President will see Colonel McKenney to-day, at twelve o'clock.' I was punctual, and found the President alone. I commenced by repeating what I had said at my first visit, that I was there at the instance of the Secretary of War, who had more than intimated to me that impressions of an unfavorable sort had been made upon him with regard to me; and that I was desirous of knowing what the circumstances were that had produced them. 'It is true, sir,' said the President, 'I have been told things that are highly discreditable to you, and which have come to me from such sources as to satisfy me of their truth.' 'Very well, sir, will you do me the justice to let me know what these things are that you have heard from such respectable sources?' 'You know, Colonel McKenney, I am a candid man—I beg pardon, sir,' I remarked, interrupting him, 'but I am not here to question that, but to hear charges, which it appears have been made to you, affecting my character, either as an officer of the government or a man.' 'Well, sir,' he resumed, 'I will frankly tell you what these charges



are, and, sir, they are of a character which I can never respect.' 'No doubt of that, sir; but what are they?' 'Why, sir, I am told, and on the best authority, that you were one of the principal promoters of that vile paper, *We the People*, as a contributor toward establishing it, and as a writer afterward, in which my wife Rachel was so shamefully abused. I am told, further, on authority no less respectable, that you took an active part in distributing, under the frank of your office, the "*coffin hand-bills*," and that in your recent travels, you largely and widely circulated the militia pamphlet.' Here he paused, crossed his legs, shook his foot, and clasped his hands around the upper knee, and looked at me as though he had actually convicted and prostrated me; when, after a moment's pause, I asked, 'Well, sir, what else?' 'Why, sir,' he answered, 'I think such conduct highly unbecoming in one who fills a place in the government such as you fill, and very derogatory to you, as it would be in any one who should be guilty of such practices.' 'All this,' I replied, 'may be well enough; but I request to know if this is all you have heard, and whether there are any more charges?' 'Why, yes, sir, there is one more; I am told your office is not in the condition in which it should be.' 'Well, sir, what more?' 'Nothing, sir; but these are all serious charges, sir.' 'Then, sir, these comprise all?' 'They do, sir.' 'Well, General,' I answered, 'I am not going to reply to all this, or to any part of it, with any view to retaining my office, nor do I intend to reply to it at all, *except under the solemnity of an oath*,' when I threw up my hand toward heaven, saying, '*the answers I am about to give to these allegations, I solemnly swear, shall be the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth*. My oath, sir, is taken, and is no doubt recorded—' He interrupted me, by saying, 'You are making quite a serious affair of it.' 'It is, sir, what I mean to do,' I answered.

"Now, sir, in regard to the paper called "*We the People*," I never did, directly or indirectly, either by my money, or by my pen, contribute toward its establishment, or its continuance. I never circulated one copy of it, more or less, nor did I subscribe for a copy of it, more or less; nor have I ever, to the best of my knowledge and belief, handled a copy of it, nor have I ever seen but two copies, and these were on the table of a friend, among other newspapers. So much for that charge. In regard to the "*coffin hand-bills*," I never circulated any, either under the frank of my office or otherwise, and never saw but two; and am not certain that I ever saw but one, and that some fool sent me, under cover, from Richmond, in Virginia, and which I found on my desk among other papers, on going to my office; and which, on seeing what it was, I tore up and threw aside among the waste paper, to be swept out by my messenger. The other, which I took to be one of these bills, but which might have been an account of the hanging of some convict, I saw some time ago, pendent

from a man's finger and thumb, he having a roll under his arm, as he crossed Broadway, in New York. So much for the coffin hand-bills. As to the "militia pamphlet," I have seen reference made to it in the newspapers, it is true, but I have never handled it—have never read it, or circulated a copy or copies of it, directly or indirectly. And now, sir, as to my office. That is my monument; its records are its inscriptions. Let it be examined, and I invite a commission for that purpose; nor will I return to it to put a paper in its place, should it be out of place, or in any other way prepare it for the ordeal; and, if there is a single flaw in it, or any just grounds for complaint, either on the part of the white or the red man, implicating my capacity—my diligence, or want of due regard to the interests of all having business with it, including the government, then, sir, you shall have my free consent to put any mark upon me you may think proper, or subject me to as much opprobrium as shall gratify those who have thus abused your confidence by their secret attempts to injure me.'

" 'Colonel McKenney,' said the General, who had kept his eyes upon me during the whole of my reply, 'I believe every word you have said, and am satisfied that those who communicated to me those allegations were mistaken.' 'I thank you, sir,' I replied, 'for your confidence, but I am not satisfied. I request to have my accusers brought up, and that I may be allowed to confront them in your presence.' 'No—no, sir,' he answered, 'I am satisfied; why then push the matter farther?' when, rising from his chair, he took my arm, and said, 'Come, sir, come down, and allow me to introduce you to my family.' I accompanied him, and was introduced to Mrs. Donaldson, Major Donaldson, and some others who were present, partook of the offering of a glass of wine, and retired.

" The next morning I believe it was—or if not the next, some morning not far off—a Mr. R-b-s-n, a very worthy, gentlemanly fellow, and well known to me, came into my office. 'You are busy, Colonel?' he said, as he entered. 'No, sir, not very,' I replied; 'come in—I have learned to write and talk too, at the same time. Come in; sit down; I am glad to see you.' Looking round the office, the entire walls of which I had covered with portraits of Indians, he asked, pointing to the one that hung over my desk, 'Who is that?' '*Red-Jacket*,' I answered. 'And that?' '*Shin-guab-O' Wassin*,' I replied; and so he continued. He then asked, 'Who wrote the treaties with the Indians, and gave instructions to commissions, and, in general, carried on the correspondence of the office?' 'These are within the circle of my duties, the whole being under a general supervision of the Secretary of War,' I answered. 'Well, then,' after a pause, he said, 'the office will not suit me.' 'What office,' I asked. 'This,' he replied; 'General Jackson told me, this morning, it was at my service; but before seeing the Secretary of War, I thought I would come and have a little chat with you first.'

"I rose from my chair, saying—'Take it, my dear sir, take it. The sword of Damocles has been hanging over my head long enough.' 'No,' said he, 'it is not the sort of place for me. I prefer an auditor's office, where forms are established.' This worthy citizen had, in the fullness of his heart, doubtless, and out of pure affection for General Jackson, made that distinguished personage a present of the pair of pistols which General Washington had carried during the war of the Revolution."\*

Colonel McKenney retained his office some time longer, because the Secretary of War assured the President that its duties were complex and numerous, and could not be discharged by a person inexperienced in Indian affairs. He tells us, however, that he was kept in constant suspense, and had, occasionally, an ominous warning: "My chief clerk, Mr. Hambleton, came into my room one morning, soon after I had taken my seat at my table, and putting his hands upon it, leaned over. I looked up, and saw his eyes were full of tears! To my question—'Is any thing the matter, Mr. Hambleton?' 'Yes, sir—I am pained to inform you, that you are to be displaced to-day! We all feel it. Our connection has been one of unbroken harmony; and we are grieved at the thought of a separation. The President has appointed General Thompson, a member of Congress, of Georgia—he boards at my mother's, and I have it from himself. He says I shall remain, but the rest of the clerks he shall dismiss, to make room for some of the President's friends.' 'Well, Mr. H.,' I replied, 'it is what I have been constantly looking for. Your annunciation does not at all surprise me; indeed, it puts an end to my suspense; and, apart from the pain of leaving you all, and the thought that others are to be cut adrift, as well as myself, I feel relieved.' He walked a few times across my room, and then retired to his, which joined mine. Two hours after, I heard walking and earnest talking in the passage. They continued for half an hour. When they ceased, Mr. Hambleton came into my room, his face all dressed in smiles, saying, '*It is not to be!*' 'What is not to be?' 'You are not to go out. When

\* McKenney's Memoirs, p. 200.

General Thompson came to the secretary this morning, with the President's reference to him, to assign him to your place, he was told, before he could act, he (the secretary) must see the President. The result of the secretary's interview with the President was, you were to be retained, and General Thompson is referred back to the President for explanation. Thompson is in a rage about it.' "

Another illustrative anecdote, which, though it may not be wholly true, is so like others that are known to be so, that I venture to think it is, at least, founded in fact. A member of Congress, appointed to a foreign mission, consulted the President as to the choice of a secretary of legation. "The President declined all interference, and remarked to the minister that the United States government would hold him responsible for the manner in which he discharged his duties, and that he would consequently be at liberty to choose his own secretary. The minister returned his acknowledgment; but before taking leave, sought his advice in regard to a young gentleman then in the State Department, and who was highly recommended by the secretary. General Jackson promptly said, 'I advise you, sir, not to take the man. He is not a good judge of preaching.' The minister observed that the objection needed explanation. 'I am able to give it,' said the General, and he thus continued: 'On last Sabbath morning I attended divine service in the Methodist Episcopal church in this city. There I listened to a soul-inspiring sermon by Professor Durbin of Carlisle, one of the ablest pulpit orators in America. Seated in a pew near me I observed this identical young man, apparently an attentive listener. On the day following he came into this chamber on business, when I had the curiosity to ask his opinion of the sermon and the preacher. And what think you, sir? The young upstart, with consummate assurance, pronounced that sermon all froth, and Professor Durbin a humbug! I took the liberty of saying to him: My young man, you are a humbug yourself, and don't know it! And now,' continued the old man, 'rest assured, my dear sir, that a man who is not a

better judge of preaching than that, is unfit to be your companion. And besides,' he added, 'if he were the prodigy the Secretary of State represents him to be, he would be less anxious to confer his services upon you—he would rather be anxious to retain them himself.' ”

As a general rule, the dismissal of officers was sudden and unexplained. Occasionally, however, some reason was assigned. Major Eaton, for example, dismissed the chief clerk of the War Department in the terms following: “Major —: The chief clerk of the Department should to his principal stand in the relation of a confidential friend. Under this belief, I have appointed Doctor Randolph, of Virginia. I take leave to say, that since I have been in this Department, nothing in relation to you has transpired to which I would take the slightest objection, nor have I any to suggest.”

These facts will suffice to show that the old system of appointments and removals was changed, upon the accession of General Jackson, to the one in vogue ever since, which Governor Marcy completely and aptly described when he said that to the victors belong the spoils. Some of the consequences of this change are the following:

I. The government, formerly served by the *elite* of the nation, is now served, to a very considerable extent, by its refuse. That, at least, is the tendency of the new system, because men of intelligence, ability, and virtue, universally desire to fix their affairs on a basis of permanence. It is the nature of such men to make each year do something for all the years to come. It is their nature to abhor the arts by which office is now obtained and retained. In the year of our Lord 1859, the fact of a man's holding office under the government is presumptive evidence that he is one of three characters, namely, an adventurer, an incompetent person, or a scoundrel. From this remark must be excepted those who hold offices that have never been subjected to the spoils system, or offices which have been “taken out of politics.”

II. The new system places at the disposal of any govern-

ment, however corrupt, a horde of creatures in every town and county, bound, body and soul, to its defense and continuance.

III. It places at the disposal of any candidate for the presidency, who has a slight prospect of success, another horde of creatures in every town and county, bound to support his pretensions. I once knew an apple-woman in Wall Street who had a personal interest in the election of a President. If *her* candidate gained the day, her "old man" would get the place of porter in a public warehouse. The circle of corruption embraces hundreds of thousands.

IV. The spoils system takes from the government employée those motives to fidelity which, in private life, are found universally necessary to secure it. As no degree of merit whatever can secure him in his place, he must be a man of heroic virtue who does not act upon the principle of getting the most out of it while he holds it. Whatever fidelity may be found in office-holders must be set down to the credit of unassisted human virtue.

In a word, the spoils system renders pure, decent, orderly, and democratic government impossible. Nor has any government of modern times given such a wonderful proof of inherent strength as is afforded by the fact that this government, after thirty years of rotation, still exists.

At whose door is to be laid the blame of thus debauching the government of the United States? It may, perhaps, be justly divided into three parts. First, Andrew Jackson, impelled by his ruling passions, resentment, and gratitude, *did* the deed. No other man of his day had audacity enough. Secondly, The example and the politicians of New York furnished him with an excuse for doing it. Thirdly, The original imperfection of the governmental machinery seemed to necessitate it. As soon as King Caucus was overthrown, the spoils system became almost inevitable, and, perhaps, General Jackson only precipitated a change, which, sooner or later, must have come.

While the congressional caucus system lasted, confining

the sphere of intrigue to the city of Washington, politicians did not much want the aid of the remote subordinate employées of the government. But when the area of president making was extended so as to embrace the whole nation, every tide-waiter, constable, porter, and postmaster could lend a hand. Well, then, do not burst with virtuous rage, **until** you have duly reflected upon the fact, too well known, **that** the average disinterested voter can only with difficulty be induced even to take the trouble to go to the polls and deposit his vote. Without the stimulus of interested expectation, how is the work of a presidential campaign to be got done? Who will paint the flags, and pay for the Roman candles, and print the documents, and supply the stump! The patriotic citizen, do you answer? Why does he not do it then?

The spoils system, we may hope, however, has nearly run its course. It is already well understood, that every service in which efficiency is indispensable must be *taken out of politics*; and this process, happily begun in some departments of municipal government, will assuredly continue. The first century of the existence of a nation, which is to last thirty centuries or more, should be regarded merely in the light of the "Great Republic's" experimental trip. A leak has developed itself. It will be stopped.

The course of the administration with regard to removals excited a clamor so loud and general as to inspire the opposition with new hopes. The old federalists who had aided to elect General Jackson were especially shocked. Occasionally, too, the officers removed did not submit to decapitation in silence. The most remarkable protest published at the time was from the wife of one of the removed, Mrs. Barney, a daughter of the celebrated Judge Chase. Her husband's case was one of peculiar hardship, and she narrated it with the eloquence of sorrow and indignation:

"My husband, sir, never was your enemy. In the overflowing patriotism of his heart, he gave you the full measure of his love for your military services. He preferred Mr. Adams for the presidency, because he thought

him qualified, and you unqualified, for the station. He would have been a traitor to his country, he would have had even my scorn, and have deserved yours, had he supported you under such circumstances. He used no means to oppose you. He did a patriot's duty in a patriot's way. For this he is proscribed—*punished!* Oh! how punished! My heart bleeds as I write. Cruel sir! Did he commit any offense worthy of punishment against God, or against his country, or even against you? Blush while you read this question; speak not, but let the crimson negative mantle on your cheek! No, sir—on the contrary, it was one of the best acts of his life. When he bared his bosom to the hostile bayonets of his enemies, he was not more in the *line of his duty*, than when he voted against you; and had he fallen a martyr on the field of fight, he would not more have deserved a monument, than he now deserves for having been worse than martyred in support of the dearest privilege and chartered right of American freemen. Careless as you are about the effects of your conduct, it would be idle to inform you of the depth and quality of that misery which you have worked in the bosom of my family. Else would I tell a tale that would provoke sympathy in any thing that had a heart, or gentle drops of pity from every eye not accustomed to look upon scenes of human cruelty 'with composure.' Besides, you were apprised of our poverty; you knew the dependence of eight little children for food and raiment upon my husband's salary. You knew that, advanced in years as he was, without the means to prosecute any regular business, and without friends able to assist him, the world would be to him a barren heath, an inhospitable wild. You were able, therefore, to anticipate the heart-rending scene which you may now realize as the sole work of your hand. The sickness and debility of my husband now calls upon me to vindicate his and his children's wrongs. The natural timidity of my sex vanishes before the necessity of my situation; and a spirit, sir, as proud as yours, although in a female bosom, demands justice. At your hands I ask it. Return to him what you have rudely torn from his possession; give back to his children their former means of securing their food and raiment; show that you can relent, and that your rule has had at least one exception. The severity practiced by you in this instance is heightened, because accompanied by a breach of your faith, solemnly pledged to my husband. He called upon you, told you frankly that he had not voted for you. What was your reply? It was, in substance, this, 'that every citizen of the United States had a right to express his political sentiments by his vote; that no charges had been made against Major Barney; if any should be made, he should have justice done; he should not be condemned unheard.' Then, holding him by the hand with apparent warmth, you concluded—'Be assured, sir, I shall be particularly cautious how I listen to assertions of applicants for office.' With these assurances from you, sir, the President of the United States, my husband re-



turned to the bosom of his family. With these rehearsed, he wiped away the tears of apprehension. The President was not the monster he had been represented. They would not be reduced to beggary—haggard want would not be permitted to enter the mansion where he had always been a stranger. The husband and the father had done nothing in violation of his duty as an officer. If any malicious slanderer should arise to pour his poisonous breath into the ears of the President, the accused would not be condemned unheard, and his innocence would be triumphant—they would still be happy. It was presumable also, that, possessing the confidence of three successive administrations (whose testimony in his favor I presented to you), he was not unworthy the office he held; besides, the signatures of a hundred of our first mercantile houses established the fact of his having given perfect satisfaction in the manner he transacted the business of his office. In this state of calm security, without a moment's warning—like a clap of thunder in a clear sky—your dismissal came, and, in a moment, the house of joy was converted into one of mourning. Sir, was not this the refinement of cruelty? But this was not all. The wife whom you thus agonized, drew her being from the illustrious Chase, whose voice of thunder early broke the spell of British allegiance, when in the American Senate, he swore by Heaven that he owed no allegiance to the British Crown—one, too, whose signature was broadly before your eyes, affixed to the Charter of our Independence. The husband and the father whom you have thus wronged, was the first-born son of a hero, whose naval and military renown brightens the pages of your country's history, from '76 to 1815, with whose achievements posterity will not condescend to compare yours; for he fought amidst greater dangers, and he fought for Independence. By the side of that father, in the second British war, fought the son; and the glorious 12th of September bears testimony to his unshaken intrepidity. A wife, a husband, thus derived; a family of children drawing their existence from this double revolutionary fountain, you have recklessly, causelessly, perfidiously, and therefore inhumanly, cast helpless and destitute upon the icy bosom of the world; and the children and the grandchildren of Judge Chase and Commodore Barney are poverty stricken upon the soil which owes its freedom and fertility, in part, to their heroic patriotism."

The reader ought to be informed, I think, that his friend and benefactor, Major Lewis, opposed this fatal removal policy from the beginning to the end. "In relation to the principle of rotation," he once wrote to General Jackson, "I embrace this occasion to enter my solemn protest against it; not on account of my office, but because I hold it to be fraught with

the greatest mischief to the country. If ever it should be carried out *in extenso*, the days of this republic will, in my opinion, have been numbered; for whenever the impression shall become general that the government is only valuable on account of its *offices*, the great and paramount interest of the country will be lost sight of, and the government itself ultimately destroyed. This, at least, is the honest conviction of my mind with regard to these novel doctrines of rotation in office."

Gen. Jackson's private letters this summer, to friends in Tennessee, show that he was a sick, unhappy, perplexed old man. On the 7th of June, he wrote thus to an old friend:

GENERAL JACKSON TO CAPTAIN JOHN DONELSON, SEN.

"WASHINGTON, June 7, 1829.

"MY DEAR SIR: Your letter of the 19th ultimo is just received. What satisfaction to me to be informed that you and Mr. Hume had visited the Hermitage and tomb of my dear departed wife. How distressing it has been to me to have been drawn by public duty from that interesting spot where my thoughts delight to dwell, so soon after this heavy bereavement to mingle with all the bustle, labor, and care of public life, when my age, my enfeebled health and constitution, forewarned me that my time can not be long upon earth, and admonished me that it was time I should place my earthly house in order, and prepare for another, and, I hope, a better world.

"My dear wife had your future state much at heart. She often spoke to me on this interesting subject in the dead hours of the night, and has shed many tears on the occasion. Your reflections upon the sincere interest your dear sister took in your future happiness are such as sound reason dictates. Yes, my friend, it is time that you should withdraw from the turmoils of this world, and prepare for another and better. You have well provided for your household. You have educated your children, and furnished them with an outfit into life sufficient, with good management and economy, to build an independence upon. You have sufficient around you to make you and your old lady independent and comfortable during life; and, when gone hence, perhaps as much as will be prudently managed; and if it should be imprudently managed, then it will be a curse rather than a blessing to your children. I therefore join in the sentiments of my deceased and beloved wife, in admonishing you to withdraw from the busy scenes of this world, and put your house in order for the next, by laying hold of 'the one thing needful.' Go, read the Scriptures. The joyful prom-

ises it contains will be a balsam to all your troubles, and create for you a kind of heaven here on earth, a consolation to your troubled mind that is not to be found in the hurry and bustle of this world.

"Could I but withdraw from the scenes that surround me to the private walks of the Hermitage, how soon would I be found in the solitary shades of my garden, at the tomb of my dear wife, there to spend my days in silent sorrow, and in peace from the toils and strife of this life, with which I have been long since satisfied. But this is denied me. I can not retire with propriety. When my friends dragged me before the public, contrary to my wishes, and that of my dear wife, I foresaw all this evil, but I was obliged to bend to the wishes of my friends, as it was believed it was necessary to perpetuate the blessings of liberty to our country and to put down misrule. My political creed compelled me to yield to the call, and I consoled myself with the idea of having the counsel and society of my dear wife; and one term would soon run round, when we would retire to the Hermitage, and spend our days in the service of our God.

"But oh! how fluctuating are all earthly things! At the time I least expected it, and could least spare her, she was snatched from me, and I left here a solitary monument of grief, without the least hope of any happiness here below, surrounded with all the turmoils of public life, and no time for recreation or for friendship. From this busy scene I would to God I could retire and live in solitude.

"How much the conduct of ——— corrodes my feelings! I have just received a letter from him to ———, in which he says there is a vacancy at the Franklin Academy, and promises to write me. If he does not go to school, I will withdraw from him all supplies that may indulge extravagance, and confine him to such means as, with economy, will keep him decent. We are all in tolerable health. ——— is in the family way. Little Jackson growing finely, and all join in our best wishes to you and your amiable lady, and all our connections and good neighbors. Your friend,

ANDREW JACKSON.

"CAPTAIN JOHN DONELSON, SEN."

"P. S.—Mr. Steel (overseer) has written me but one letter. Say to him to write me how much crop he has in, how many colts, lambs, and calves, and how my last year's colts are, and of the health of my negroes.

"I learn old Ned and Jack are both dead. Jack was a fine boy, but if he was well attended to, I lament not. He has gone the way of all the earth.

A. J."

In a similar strain the President, later in the year, wrote to Judge Hugh L. White: "Both of us, I do suppose, would

be more contented and happy in private life ; but the Lord hath willed it, and we must submit. How grateful I feel to you for your kind and friendly visit to the Hermitage, where lies all that made life desirable to me, and whose loss I can never cease to mourn, and over whose tomb I would like to spend the remnant of my days in solitude, preparing to meet her in a happier and a better world."

Before proceeding to the important affairs of General Jackson's administration, I will give a still nearer view of the President's office. The perusal of the following narrative will greatly aid the reader to comprehend that peculiar and intense personality which was able to accomplish so much, —at once, the weakest and the strongest then incarnate.

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## CHAPTER XIX.

### SUCCESSFUL POLITICIAN'S STORY.

(TAKEN DOWN AFTER INTERVIEWS.)

No matter for my name. Call me X. Clark. X may signify that I am an unknown quantity. Clark will indicate my early vocation. "My whole" will convey a hint that I am not what I was.

Our family is one of the oldest of the old New York families. Our portraits show it. We appear in brocade and diamonds, in ruffles and pig-tail, on canvas that was woven long before the revolution. We were tories then, high tories, staunch for church and king. In later days we went over to the popular side. We were republicans in Jefferson's time ; buck-tails in Van Buren's ; democrats in Jackson's. Our family stood high in the party. My great uncle was supposed to know as much of the proceedings of the Albany Regency as the Albany Regency itself ; and Mr. Van Buren, our political chief, the great buck of the buck-tails. New

York's favorite son, was my great uncle's friend. We deemed the fact stupendous, for Mr. Van Buren filled a great space in the public mind in the days when I was young. To my boyish fancy he was the very chief of men, foremost among the foremost, orator, statesman, magician, victor !

I was bred to the mercantile business. At fourteen, I swept the store and carried the keys. At twenty, I was a clerk in full communion. At twenty-two, a book-keeper. At twenty-six, I rejoiced in the title of secretary to a company. A more unsophisticated young man than I was at that age did not exist. Brought up to mind my own business, accustomed to deal with merchants of the old school, who said little, and meant all they said, acquainted only with the politics of a quiet mercantile ward, in which none but men of substance and respectability took a leading part, I had in me as little of the politician as can be imagined. So unacquainted was I with the world, that when a man said to me, " Mr. Clark, I am glad to see you," or, " I shall be glad to serve you," I believed him. Indeed, the member of our old firm, whose ways I chiefly relished, was a man of such a nice sense of truth, that if he had said he was glad to see a person whom he was not glad to see, he would have felt that he had told a lie. I supposed, in my innocence, that it was so with all great men.

In the spring of 1829, two events occurred of the first importance in my history. General Jackson became President of the United States, and the company of which I was the secretary ceased to exist. I said to myself, " I have lived in New York long enough ; it is time I saw something of the world. Our party is in power, and our party is a party that rewards its friends. I'll go to Washington, and get a clerkship in one of the departments." My uncle approved my determination, and gave me a letter of introduction to Mr. Van Buren. My honored friend of the old firm, who was also a member of Congress, gave me a handsome recommendation as a correct and skillful accountant, and this also was in the form of a letter of introduction to Mr. Van Buren. " Gov-

ernor Van Buren" we called him in those days, for we had elected him Governor in the previous autumn. When I obtained my letters of introduction, his appointment as Secretary of State and his resignation of the governorship had just been announced, and the great man was daily expected to pass through New York on his way to Washington.

He came. I had read in the morning papers that he was to arrive by the day boat from Albany, and I went down to the dock to get a sight of him. Having never seen him, I felt extremely curious to behold the man of whom I had heard so much, and who, I hoped, was about to do something great for me. Two gentlemen were walking up and down the hurricane deck, arm in arm, while the boat was getting into her berth. One was a short gentleman, of middle age; the other a very young man. The crowd on the wharf were cheering.

"The Governor must have come," I said to a bystander, "but why don't he show himself? He ought to be up there on the hurricane deck."

"There he is," said the person I had addressed; "that little fellow in the surtout, and that's his son walking with him."

What a surprise! What a disenchantment! It had been a fixed idea with me that Governor Van Buren was a man of the same magnificent physical proportions as Governor Clinton. I expected him to be even more imposing and superb than Clinton. I had also a general notion that all governors were vast, which was owing, I suppose, to the circumstance that the only Governor I had ever seen seemed so to my wondering young eyes. It is impossible for this generation to conceive what a great man a Governor was thirty or forty years ago.

I saw the father and son drive away in a carriage. They were going, as I knew, to the City Hotel, the great hotel of that day, situated in the lower part of Broadway, a region long since given up to business. I followed them leisurely on foot, and on reaching the hotel, found the bar-room crowded

with politicians, anxious to "pay their respects" to the new premier. In a few minutes the doors of the great dining-room were thrown open, and the clerk of the house, mounted on a chair, cried out :

"Gentlemen who desire to see Mr. Van Buren will please walk into the dining-room."

We thundered in—fifty or sixty of us ; politicians in and out of place ; these wanting to get in, those to stay in. We were all hail fellows well met, and there was a roar of jovial talk and banter. Politicians, you know, are friendly to every body ; for no man knows who can or who can not forward his views, nor how soon a man now powerless may be in a position to help. After waiting a while, all expecting the great man to present himself, a waiter appeared, and said :

"Gentlemen, Mr. Van Buren requests your cards."

The old stagers laughed. There was a general fumbling in pockets.

"Cards ?" said I. "What does he want our cards for ? I have no card with me. I shall write a note to the Governor."

Amid the merriment of the group nearest me, I wrote my note in something like these words :

"SIR—I am the bearer of two letters of introduction to you : one from my uncle, Mr. ———, and the other from my friend, the Hon. ———. I have called for the purpose of delivering them to you, and shall be glad if you will name an hour when it will be convenient for you to receive them. I am, etc. "X. CLARK."

I folded my note, and placed it on the tray with the cards. The waiter vanished, reappeared, and delivered himself as follows :

"Gentlemen, Mr. Van Buren sends his compliments, and says he is fatigued with his journey, and requests the honor of your company this evening, at eight o'clock, one and all. Mr. Clark will please to wait !"

I became instantly the lion of the room. I was severely bantered.

"Clark," said one, "you are a made man. You'll get the best office in the gift of the government. Not a doubt of it."

The crowd oozed away into the congenial bar-room again, the great doors were shut, and I was left alone seated by the fire. I sat some minutes, waiting and wondering, and thinking what I should say to the Coming Man. Without having heard any one enter, I looked up at length, and lo ! there, on the opposite side of the fire-place, sat the Magician ! We rose and exchanged the usual salutations. I presented my letters, which Mr. Van Buren courteously took and read deliberately. He re-folded them, and said, as he did so :

"I highly esteem your uncle, and also your friend Mr. ——. No men in the State stand higher in my regard than they. If I can do any thing to oblige them or forward your views, it will give me great pleasure."

Here the interview, as I afterward knew, would have properly ended. But such was my utter inexperience of the great world, that I took these words of simple civility in their literal acceptation. I felt that I was a "made man." There was no doubt that the Secretary of State *could* forward my views if he wished to do so, and he had just informed me that he *did* wish it. What more could a young man desire ? How often, in later times, have I wondered at this incredible simplicity in a boy of twenty-six.

The Governor sat silent, expecting and desiring me to take my leave. Not perceiving his intent, I asked, with the assurance of perfect verdancy :

"When do you go to Washington, Mr. Van Buren ?"

"When do I go to Washington ?" he said, with a bland stare, which mildly intimated, "What is that to *you*, young man ?"

"Yes, sir," I continued ; "I wish to know when you are going to Washington. It is important to me that I should know."

"Well," said he, "I can't say exactly. In a few days, I presume."



"few days, sir?" said I: "not sooner?"

"No," said he, "won't that suit you?"

"Well, Mr. Van Buren," I replied, "I can't say it does." "Very well."

"Indeed?" he continued, "I am sorry you are not suited. When do you propose to go yourself?"

"To-morrow morning."

"No sooner?"

"Why, yes, sir. That is, if you have no objection. Have you any?"

"No, sir. Oh, by no means. I think you can't do better than go to-morrow morning."

"I thought not, sir," said I, all unconscious of the absurdity of my proceedings, and of his astonishment.

Again there was an awkward pause. Again the great man wanted for me to take my hat and leave. I did nothing of the kind.

"Mr. Van Buren," I resumed, "I don't know a soul in Washington. I should be obliged to you if you would give me a letter or two of introduction to your friends there."

His request, as I afterward understood, was almost too much even for his invincible politeness. He stared outright.

"A letter of introduction?" said he, musingly. "Let me see. Who is there in Washington just now? The Attorney General is absent, I think, and so is the Secretary of the Treasury. Governor Branch is there, I believe, and Mr. Eaton."

I fancied, afterward, that he tried to overawe me by an array of distinguished names. I was deaf and blind to all hints, however, and said,

"Oh, Mr. Van Buren, it's no matter about those other gentlemen. A letter to Mr. Eaton or to Governor Branch will answer."

"Oh, they will do, will they?"

"Perfectly," said I.

As he made no movement toward writing, I ventured to place the writing materials that I had just used nearer to

where he was sitting, and waited for him to indite the letters.

"Oh," said he, "you wish me to write *now*, do you?"

"Well, sir," I replied, "I *should* like it; but if it's inconvenient, I'll call again in the course of the day."

"No," said he; and he turned to the table and began to write.

He produced the following epistle:—"Messrs. Eaton and Branch: This will be handed to you by my young friend, Mr. Clark, who precedes me to Washington. Any attentions you may show him will be highly estimated by yours, etc.

"M. VAN BUREN."

With this passport to fortune in my pocket, I left the presence; and very glad, I think, must Mr. Van Buren have been to get rid of his innocent "young friend."

On the third morning after this interview, I awoke in the City of Washington. After a stroll about its wide and dreary expanses, I proceeded, with my precious letter in my pocket, to the office of the Secretary of the Navy. The antechamber into which I was shown was crowded with people waiting their turn to be admitted to the new dispenser of places. Verdant as I was, my three day's experience as an office-seeker seemed to have made me free of the craft, and I knew at a glance that every man in that room had come to ask an appointment. I waited, and waited, and waited. Two hours must have passed before it came my turn to see the Secretary. I was shown in, at length, and, advancing awkwardly and slowly to Mr. Branch, who sat at a table, wearing the air of a man who had been bored to within an inch of his life, and had almost lost the power of paying attention, I said:

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He took the letter, without seeming to comprehend what I had said, and was proceeding languidly to open it. He looked up at me. I suppose I was abashed at the coldness of his reception, and probably did not cut a very promising figure. In a loud, off-hand, and, as I thought, most impertinent and insulting manner, he said,

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“A few days, sir!” said I; “not sooner?”

“Why,” said he, “won’t that suit you?”

“Well, no, Mr. Van Buren,” I replied, “I can’t say it does, exactly.”

“Indeed!” he continued, “I am sorry you are not suited. When do you propose to go yourself?”

“I thought of going to-morrow morning.”

“So soon?”

“Why, yes, sir. That is, if you have no objection. Have you any?”

“I? Oh, by no means. I think you can’t do better than go to-morrow morning.”

“I thought not, sir,” said I, all unconscious of the absurdity of my proceedings, and of his astonishment.

Again there was an awkward pause. Again the great man waited for me to take my hat and leave. I did nothing of the kind.

“Mr. Van Buren,” I resumed, “I don’t know a soul in Washington. I should be obliged to you if you would give me a letter or two of introduction to your friends there.”

This request, as I afterward understood, was almost too much even for his invincible politeness. He stared outright.

“A letter of introduction?” said he, musingly. “Let me see. Who is there in Washington just now? The Attorney-General is absent, I think, and so is the Secretary of the Treasury. Governor Branch is there, I believe, and Mr. Eaton.”

I fancied, afterward, that he tried to overawe me by an array of distinguished names. I was deaf and blind to all hints, however, and said,

“Oh, Mr. Van Buren, it’s no matter about those other gentlemen. A letter to Mr. Eaton or to Governor Branch will answer.”

“Oh, they will do, will they?”

“Perfectly,” said I.

As he made no movement toward writing, I ventured to place the writing materials that I had just used nearer to

where he was sitting, and waited for him to indite the letters.

"Oh," said he, "you wish me to write *now*, do you?"

"Well, sir," I replied, "I *should* like it; but if it's inconvenient, I'll call again in the course of the day."

"No," said he; and he turned to the table and began to write.

He produced the following epistle:—"Messrs. Eaton and Branch: This will be handed to you by my young friend, Mr. Clark, who precedes me to Washington. Any attentions you may show him will be highly estimated by yours, etc.

"M. VAN BUREN."

With this passport to fortune in my pocket, I left the presence; and very glad, I think, must Mr. Van Buren have been to get rid of his innocent "young friend."

On the third morning after this interview, I awoke in the City of Washington. After a stroll about its wide and dreary expanses, I proceeded, with my precious letter in my pocket, to the office of the Secretary of the Navy. The antechamber into which I was shown was crowded with people waiting their turn to be admitted to the new dispenser of places. Verdant as I was, my three day's experience as an office-seeker seemed to have made me free of the craft, and I knew at a glance that every man in that room had come to ask an appointment. I waited, and waited, and waited. Two hours must have passed before it came my turn to see the Secretary. I was shown in, at length, and, advancing awkwardly and slowly to Mr. Branch, who sat at a table, wearing the air of a man who had been bored to within an inch of his life, and had almost lost the power of paying attention, I said:

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my attendance was required on the following morning at 10 o'clock. The place to which I was appointed was not conspicuous, but confidential ; and, as I then thought, munificently remunerated. I had in charge the finances of the department, and was the usual confidential messenger from the Secretary of State to the President. It was the very place of all others, that I would have chosen, and the very place I felt myself fitted to fill with credit. My gratitude to the Secretary was boundless, and so was my desire to stand high in his regard.

At ten in the morning, I presented myself at the office of the Secretary of State. My predecessor, as I learnt afterward, had received no intimation that he was to be removed up to that moment. He was a *protégé* of the late President, Mr. Adams, and supposed that, according to previous usage, he would be retained, whoever might be displaced. He had a young family dependent solely upon his salary, and was himself an exceedingly amiable and worthy gentleman. Mr. Van Buren, upon seeing me enter his apartment rang for a messenger, to whom he said,

“Inform Mr. Jones\* that I wish to speak with him for a moment.”

Mr. Jones appeared. Mr. Van Buren addressed him in these words,

“Mr. Jones, I beg to make you acquainted with Mr. Clark of New York. The government, Mr. Jones, has no further occasion for your services in this department. Mr. Clark is appointed your successor. Have the goodness to take him to your room, and give him what information he requires respecting his duties.”

The blow was so sudden and so unexpected, that poor Jones could scarcely conceal his feelings. He stood, for a moment, paralyzed and speechless, and then left the room without a word. I followed him to his office, upon reaching which, he said, in a tremulous voice, and a wild, absent manner,

\* Fictitious name.

"Excuse me a moment, Mr. Clark, this is rather sudden. I will rejoin you in a moment."

He staggered out of the room, and remained absent about ten minutes. When he returned, all traces of emotion had vanished, both from his countenance and his manner, and he proceeded, with perfect courtesy and much patience, to explain to me the nature and routine of my future duties. I pitied him from my soul. I would not dismiss a scullion from my kitchen so. Nor would Mr. Van Buren. It was the System that beggared poor Jones, and made me a "made man." A System, like a Corporation, has no soul. (But it ought to be damned, nevertheless.—REPORTER.)

On rejoining Mr. Van Buren, he said to me,

"I know nothing about this place of yours. Find out the law and govern yourself by it."

He said to me, afterward, that he hated patronage. He preferred an office that had none.

"No matter how you dispense it, you make enemies. The man you remove is your enemy. His friends are offended. The man you appoint is not likely to be satisfied, and all the unsuccessful applicants feel themselves injured."

"I am an exception to your remark, Mr. Van Buren," said I, "for I am perfectly satisfied with my place. I would not change it for any in the department. I could wish nothing better."

As I had charge of some of the Secret Service funds, the disbursements from which required the President's special authorization, the course of my duties led me often to the White House. My first interview with the President displayed my faculty of honest blundering to fine advantage. Charged as I was, on that interesting occasion, with a packet of papers from my chief, I marched up to the door of the presidential mansion, big with a sense of the grandeur of my mission. I had also an extreme desire to see General Jackson, whom I had been accustomed from childhood to revere. An Irish porter answered my ring.

"I wish to see the President," said I, perhaps not with the condescension which becomes a great man.

The man replied, in a tone of the most irritating non-chalance,

"The President is engaged, and can't be seen."

"But I *must* see the President," said I, in a very decided manner. "I have business with the President."

He said he would take up a card. So I hastily wrote on one the name of Mr. VAN BUREN, meaning that I was there by that gentleman's orders, and was his representative. I added some indistinct words to that effect, which, as I soon learned, were either illegible or not observed. The porter became obsequious enough when he had caught the name I had written, and invited me to take a seat in the vestibule. He took up my card, and instantly returned with a request for me to "walk up."

I walked up. I entered the President's office, where half a dozen gentlemen were seated in conversation. On my presenting myself at the door, the whole group, including the President, rose, and, after eyeing me a moment, burst into laughter. I stood astonished and abashed. The President, however, immediately explained the cause of this sudden merriment.

"Mr. Clark, I presume," said he, very politely.

"The same, sir," said I.

"Excuse our laughing, Mr. Clark," he continued. "I just glanced at your card, and seeing the name of Mr. Van Buren, concluded that we were about to see that gentleman."

I explained how the error arose, and, in doing so, happened to use a phrase, the selection of which would have done honor to the most adroit of politicians.

"I brought no card of my own, Mr. President," said I, "as it did not occur to me that a messenger from Mr. Van Buren could be refused admittance. And when your porter, sir, said that you were engaged and could not be seen, I thought *I would take the responsibility* of sending up the name of Mr. Van Buren."



Upon this, the General gave a most energetic pull at the bell-rope. The offending porter appeared.

"This gentleman," said the President, "is to be admitted at all times. Mark my words—at all times. Mr. Clark, be seated. In a few moments I shall be at your service."

He spoke in a peculiarly frank and cordial, yet authoritative manner. There was the MASTER in his every tone, but a master whom it would be a delight to serve. I loved him from that hour. In his presence I always felt entirely at home, but in Mr. Van Buren's, though I saw him every day, I never felt so. My business with the President, at that time, was merely formal. He examined the statement I had brought with me, signed it, and I took my leave. I noticed that the pen with which he wrote was a steel one of remarkable size. Some one asked him, one day, when he complained of his pen, if he should take it to the blacksmith's for repair. It was a great pen, and he wrote with a furious rapidity, sometimes, that I have never seen equaled.

A few days after this interview, Mr. Van Buren, who had been for a day or two employed upon an important foreign dispatch, requested me to make a fair copy of the same, and take it to the President, and ask him if it correctly expressed his views. The Secretary of State, I may add, devoted himself most laboriously to the duties of his department, and took great pains with his official letters. He used to write on paper ruled very wide, so that he could add to or alter them the more conveniently. This particular dispatch came to my hands, I remember, black with erasures and interlineations. I copied it and took it up to the President, who read it over with great deliberation, and sat brooding over it for some minutes after he had finished it. He broke silence at length :

"Well, Mr. Clark, I don't see the use of beating round the bush in this way, when you can say what you mean in a straightforward manner. What do *you* think of it?"

"I, Mr. President? I am incapable of judging of such an affair. My opinion is worth nothing."

“That’s for me to say,” rejoined the General; “I want your opinion.”

“Well, sir,” said I, “since you ask me, I must say that the straightforward way of saying a thing has always seemed to me the best. In fact, I know no other. But really, General, I am very inexperienced, and perhaps—”

“I think just so,” broke in the General, energetically. “Leave the paper with me, Mr. Clark, and I’ll see Mr. Van Buren myself about it. Ask him to step up and see me.”

I obeyed. The next morning I fancied that the manner of my chief was somewhat more reserved toward me than usual. He dropped a remark in the course of the day, which led me to infer that he did not approve of my observation to the President, non-committal though it had been. I then narrated to him the interview just as it occurred. I told him I had shrunk from expressing an opinion, but the President had demanded it peremptorily, and I was compelled to give it, such as it was. He seemed satisfied with my explanation, and never alluded to the circumstance again. He may have remembered it, however. I know I thought so ten years afterward.

Before many days elapsed, I was again in the President’s private office, on an errand of the same nature, when he again asked my opinion of the paper I had brought him to read. I was not going to be caught a second time. Indeed, I had made up my mind beforehand that I would venture no more opinions on any subject in that apartment. So I said, in my blunt way :

“Mr. President, I really wish you would n’t ask me what I think. The truth is, sir, Mr. Van Buren did n’t seem pleased that I gave you my opinion the other day about the dispatch.”

I then told him what Mr. Van Buren had said, and how I had explained the matter. The General laughed heartily.

“Why, he was n’t offended, was he?” he asked. “He could n’t be.”

“No,” said I, “he was n’t offended. Still he did n’t

like it, and I would decidedly prefer not to give any more opinions."

The General was exceedingly merry at this reply. At length he said :

"Come, my young friend, tell me honestly what you think of this passage, and I'll promise not to tell Van Buren any thing about it."

I then gave him my opinion. Always after that he asked me what I thought of the papers which I submitted to his perusal, and often prefaced his question by assuring me, in a jocular manner, that he would not tell Van Buren.

I soon became quite familiar with the General. Never was there a man so beset with importunate applicants for favors as he. One day, when I had had to wait long for an opportunity to transact business with him, I chanced to make a remark which, I think, had an important effect upon my whole subsequent career. He had got rid of his visitors one after another, and at last we two sat alone in the office. He had signed my accounts with his great pen, and we were conversing on some topic of the day. He seemed tired and melancholy, and I was moved to say something kind to him. I saw not before me the conquering general nor the illustrious President, but a tired, sad old man, far from his home and friends, farthest of all from his wife, and approached chiefly by flatterers, beggars, and sycophants. What to say to him I knew not, but I contrived, at last, to blunder out this :

"General, I should think you'd feel lonely here."

"Lonely?" he exclaimed. "How can you think so? Most people would think I had plenty of company. What makes you think I am lonely?"

"Well, General," I replied, "I don't mean lonely exactly. But it is not here as it was at the Hermitage, where your friends could come in and chat with you in a social way."

"No," said the President, "it is not here as it was at the Hermitage. There you're right, my young friend."

"I'll tell you, General," I continued, "exactly what I mean. Every one that comes here has an ax to grind. At

least it seems so to me, and, in fact, they say so themselves."

"Yes," said the General, "I suppose that's so. Now, let me ask you, what ax have you to grind?"

"My ax is ground," said I.

"It is, is it?" said the General, laughing.

"Yes, sir, my ax is ground. I have the pleasantest place in the department, and I am perfectly satisfied with it."

"You are perfectly satisfied, are you?"

"Perfectly."

"You have reached the summit of your ambition, then?"

"Certainly, General. I ask nothing better. I wish nothing better."

"You have no ax to grind at all?"

"None, General, none whatever."

"Neither for yourself nor for any body else?"

"Neither for myself nor for any body else."

Upon this the old man rose, took my hand, and said with much tenderness:

"My young friend, come often to see me, and we'll have many a good chat together, just as if we *were* at the Hermitage."

From that time forward I can not be mistaken in supposing I was a favorite with General Jackson. He treated me with the most marked cordiality, and appeared to give me all his confidence. The time came when I put his favor to the test, and it stood the test, as I will relate by and by.

Mr. Van Buren well knew my intimacy with the President, but it made no difference in his own demeanor toward me. Mr. Van Buren never employed the arts of personal conciliation of which he has been accused. To me he was always perfectly polite, but cold and reserved. I tried hard to win his regard, but never felt that I had made the slightest progress toward it. Even when I had rendered him a personal service, out of the line of my official duty, I could not lessen

the distance between us by a hair's breadth. He had a singular aversion to accounts, and an inaptitude for keeping them that was strange in a man who was so careful to discharge his pecuniary obligations. Soon after he arrived in Washington he came to me, with a puzzled expression of countenance, and said that his bank account was all in confusion, and that he would be very much obliged to me if I would look it over, and tell him positively whether he had any money in the bank or not. I told him I would do it with much pleasure, and asked him for his check-book.

"Check-book ! check-book !" said he, " what is that ?"

He actually did not know what a check-book was ; and, indeed, they were not commonly used, thirty years ago, except by business men. When I had straightened out his account, I procured him a check-book, and explained to him the mode of using it. He manifested the same delight as a child does in a new toy, and I saw him show it as a great curiosity to one of his Southern friends.

I remember a curious incident of my intercourse with the Secretary of State. I had occasion to call upon him at his own house one morning, when I found him writing.

" Read that letter, Mr. Clark," said he, when he had finished, " and tell me what you think of it."

I read the letter, and said :

" I will tell you what I think of it with a great deal of pleasure, Mr. Van Buren, if you will tell me what it's about."

" That will do," he replied ; " I think it will answer."

He then folded the letter, and immediately turned to the business upon which I had come. The letter was so worded that no one unacquainted with its subject could have attached the slightest meaning to any part of it.

This extraordinary man, cold and cautious as he seemed to me and to the world, was exceedingly amiable, and even jovial, in his own home. I caught him once lying on a sofa, engaged in a downright romp with his boys, which he finished by throwing a sofa-cushion at one of them. He was also, at

times, very frank in avowing both his opinions and his expedients. One day, after he had astonished a company of Virginians with a display of what seemed to them almost a miraculous familiarity with the local politics of Virginia, I asked him how he had acquired his information, adding that the Virginians, upon going out, had expressed boundless wonder at the extent of his knowledge. He answered that he had gathered most of it from those very Virginians with whom he had conversed. He had allowed them to talk *ad libitum*, and by adding what they let fall to what he knew before, he was able to *appear* to know more than they did.

The terror of Mr. Van Buren's public life was this: *to be thought an intriguer*. The very pains which he took to avoid the appearance of intrigue was often the means of fastening the charge upon him.

But to return to General Jackson. The General was a striking illustration of the doctrine of compensation. His will, if directly resisted, was not to be shaken by mortal power; but, if artfully managed, he was more easily swayed and imposed upon than any man of his day. There was a certain member of Congress who had set his heart upon a foreign mission, and had long tried to compass his aim, without effect. He obtained a clue, in some way, to one of the General's weaknesses, and changed his tactics in consequence. He cultivated my acquaintance assiduously, and accompanied me sometimes to the White House, where he gradually established himself upon a footing of office familiarity. I saw him one afternoon perform the following scene in the General's private office, myself being the only spectator thereof. The President was smoking his pipe.

"General Jackson," began the member, "I am about to ask you a favor—a favor, sir, that will cost you nothing, and the government nothing, but will gratify me exceedingly."

"It's granted, sir," said the President. "What is it?"

"Well, General, I have an old father at home who has as great an esteem for your character as one man can have for another. Before I left home, he charged me to get for

him, if possible, one of General Jackson's pipes, and that is the favor I now ask of you."

"Oh, certainly," said the General, laughing and ringing the bell.

When the servant came, he told him to bring two or three clean pipes.

"Excuse me, General," said the member, "but may I ask you for that very pipe you have just been smoking?"

"This one?" asked the General. "By all means, if you prefer it."

The President was proceeding to empty it of the ashes, when the member once more interrupted him.

"No, General, don't empty out the tobacco. I want that pipe just as it is, just as it left your lips."

The member took the pipe to the table, folded it carefully and reverently in a piece of paper, thanked the General for the precious gift with the utmost warmth, and left the room with the air of a man whose highest flight of ambition had just been more than gratified.

In a little less than three weeks after, that man departed on a mission to one of the South American States, and it was that pipe that did the business for him. At least I thought so; and if there is any meaning in a wink, he thought so too. It was also a fact, as he in confidence assured me, that his old father *did* revere General Jackson, and *would* be much gratified to possess one of his pipes. I once heard a pill-vender say to one who had laughed at his extravagant advertisements:

"Well, these pills of mine, to my certain knowledge, *have* cured some people."

Speaking of office-seeking, I will relate to you the singular process by which a clerk in the War Department was transformed into a Senator of the United States. If I had not been an eye-witness of this man's extraordinary proceedings, I could not believe the story. He was a loud, blustering, fluent, idle politician from the north, a *protégé* or friend of one of the Burrites. He was sitting on the piazza of a

hotel, one afternoon (an employment he was much addicted to), when a young man from the south began to declaim against the administration, and to denounce with particular warmth the Burr it just referred to.

"Sir," said the war-clerk, "if you feel it necessary to speak in that way, I will thank you to speak in a lower tone. The gentleman whom you are abusing is a friend of mine."

"I don't care a —— who's your friend. I shall say what I please of the scoundrel, and as loud as I please."

The clerk flew at the young southerner; but the bystanders interfered before much damage was done. In a few minutes, an officer of the army presented to the clerk a challenge from the young gentleman, which the clerk accepted. He asked me to be his second. I knew just as much of the dueling science as he did, which was nothing at all; nor did I think it proper for an employée of the government to bring discredit upon it by engaging in an affair of that kind. I declined peremptorily; and advised him to procure the assistance of a military man who understood such things. He started in pursuit of the only officer with whom he had exchanged a syllable in Washington, a captain to whom he had been casually introduced the evening before in a bar-room. He found his man and induced him to serve.

"What are your weapons?" asked the second. "You have the choice, you know."

"Have I?" exclaimed the clerk. "By Heaven, then, I have him on the hip. I choose small swords. Time, to morrow morning at sunrise."

The second remonstrated. The principal insisted. The second of the Southerner protested. The clerk was inflexible. A postponement was asked, that weapons might be procured, and the young gentlemen instructed in their use. But, no; the next morning at the rising of the sun was the only time the clerk would hear of. Late in the evening, after many hours of negotiation and the interchange of notes innumerable, the second of the Southerner formally declined the meeting. The next morning the clerk posted the young man as a



coward on all the walls of Washington. In the course of the day I met the victorious clerk and asked him where he had learned the use of the small sword.

“Small sword?” said he. “I never had one in my hand. I don’t know what it is. And I knew *he* didn’t.”

He gained great eclat by this proceeding. He was regarded as a champion of the administration; and the President, who could no more help sympathizing with a fight than a duck can help liking water, was intensely gratified. The same day news came that an important vacancy had occurred in a remote Territory, and my fighting friend saw that his hour had come. He immediately wrote a resignation of his clerkship, dating it on the day of the challenge, and presented it to the chief of his department with these words,

“Of course, sir, before accepting the challenge yesterday, I resigned my place in the department. I am not the man to connect the administration with a duel. Here it is, sir, dated as you will perceive, yesterday.”

The Secretary was delighted. The President was completely won. Rather than not reward a partisan who had fought for him, or who had shown a willingness to fight, he would almost have resigned his own office in favor of the champion. He gave the ex-clerk the vacant place. He gave him nine letters of introduction to personal friends in the Territory. Shortly after, that Territory was admitted into the Union as a sovereign State, and my fighting friend came back to Washington as one of its Senators. He served out his whole term without once revisiting the State he represented, and then retired to private life.

This incident reminds me of a conversation I once had with the President upon the subject of party appointments. I said,

“I want to ask you, General, about your advice to Mr. Monroe, that politics should not influence appointments. How do you reconcile that doctrine with the conduct of your administration?”

His countenance assumed a knowing, slightly waggish expression, as he replied,

“ Young man, we are never too old to learn.”

On another occasion he said,

“ I am no politician. But if I were a politician, I would be a New York politician.”

I had not held my clerkship long before I discovered that the accounts of all the departments were kept in the most antiquated and awkward manner. Custom and tradition ruled supreme. Some accounts in the treasury department were kept just as they were in the days of Alexander Hamilton, and according to modes devised and established by him. I did all I could for years to get the system of book-keeping by double entry introduced, but I met with insuperable difficulty. Not a man in high place knew what double entry was, or could be made to know. After a long struggle, I succeeded so far as to induce a certain Secretary of the Treasury to promise to examine a treatise on the art of book-keeping by double entry. I sent him one instantly, and hoped much from his well-known zeal and supposed intelligence. Some days after I received a message from the Secretary, asking me to call at his office, as he had made up his mind upon the subject of double entry, and wished me to learn his conclusions. I waited upon him.

“ Ah, Mr. Clark, walk in. I am now prepared to show you, sir, that double entry is no better than single.”

He took down a volume of English parliamentary reports, turned to the evidence given by the inventor of a new system of book-keeping before a committee, and pointed to these words : “ Double entry itself is no safeguard against omissions and false entries.”

“ There !” said the Secretary, triumphantly. “ You see ? High authority, sir. A professor of book-keeping ! No safeguard against omissions and false entries !”

“ Why, Mr. Secretary,” said I, utterly confounded at the man’s simplicity, “ *no* system can prevent omissions and false entries. If your clerk sells five hundred barrels of flour, and enters four hundred, or omits to enter them at all, how *can* any system of book-keeping prevent it ? The same dishon-

esty can make the book balance, no matter how false the entries may be. All book-keeping presupposes a desire on the part of the book-keeper to make an honest record, and all we claim for double entry is, that it enables him to do so with greater convenience, certainty, and expedition. Double entry is a self-corrector. Your book-keeper knows, to a certainty, whether he has or has not made an exact record."

The Secretary scratched his wise noddle with the end of his pen for a minute or two, and then delivered himself thus:

"Mr. Clark, I will frankly admit that you have explained away that difficulty with a great deal of ingenuity. I grant the force of your reasoning. But, sir, there *is* a difficulty in the way that is perfectly insurmountable. You can not argue it down. It excludes argument."

"Indeed, sir!" said I. "What is that?"

"Well, sir," he rejoined, "this is an economical government, and *no Congress will ever consent to double the number of clerks in this department!*"

I am well aware that in telling this story I draw largely upon the credulity of the listener. Nevertheless, it is true. And this very Secretary held his office longer, I believe, than it has ever been held by any other incumbent since the foundation of the government. I gave up double entry after that, and I presume they are keeping accounts in Washington in the good old way to this hour.

It is not an entirely pleasant thing to be a member of the Cabinet. All feel the pressure from above. All feel that a breath unmakes them, as a breath hath made. Men feel alike whose place and preferment depend upon the will of another man. Whether they be Cabinet ministers or Cabinet porters, the moral effect of the position is the same.

I will relate one more of my interviews with General Jackson, which left an indelible impression upon my mind, and, I think, had an effect upon my fortunes. It was a trifling affair, but it is trifles that show character.

In the Northeast boundary dispute, the king of the Netherlands offered his arbitration. The offer was accepted, and

we of the State Department were much occupied in preparing the necessary documents for transmission to Europe. One day, in the course of these preparations, a gentleman connected with the commission, a rather pompous individual, a son of a foreign consul, born and educated abroad, came into my office and requested me to have one set of the documents printed on the finest tinted drawing-paper, and bound in the most gorgeous and costly manner possible. This set, he said, was for the king's own use. The documents, he further remarked, ought to be bound in Paris, for the work could not be done in America as it ought to be. Nevertheless, I must have them done as well as the state of the arts in the United States admitted, regardless of expense.

Nettled both by the manner and the matter of this gentleman's discourse, and not perceiving any necessity for such a lavish expenditure of the public money, I told him that, the Secretary of State being absent from the city, I did not feel authorized to comply with his wishes. Nothing of the kind had ever been done before in the department, and any thing so unusual could only be warranted by the Secretary's special order. The documents were numerous, and would form several large volumes.

"But, sir," said he, with much hauteur, "you forget that these volumes are designed, not for ambassadors and secretaries, but for the king of a country."

"Well," said I, "without the express orders of the Secretary of State or of the President, I must decline doing any thing in the matter."

"I will assume the entire responsibility," he replied, "and hold you blameless. If the Secretary of State disapproves, I will take the consequences."

"Very well," said I, "if you shoulder the responsibility I will proceed."

After he had taken his departure, however, I looked into the law and the precedents, and became satisfied that there was neither law nor precedent for the work proposed. I also calculated the expense of the printing and binding, and found

it would amount to several hundred dollars. The more I thought over the matter the greater was my repugnance to ordering the work, and the result of my cogitations was, that I went to the White House to consult the President on the subject. I found the President alone, and soon told my story.

As I proceeded, the General left his seat and began to walk up and down the room, quickening his pace as I went on. At length he broke into a loud and vehement harangue, still pacing the floor.

"Go on, Mr. Clark," he exclaimed ; "you are perfectly correct, sir. Tell this gentleman from me, that Benjamin Franklin, in his woolen stockings, was no disgrace to his country. This government will never sanction what these gentlemen wish. The same habits brought reflections upon the last administration—those beautiful portfolios, those treaty boxes, and other things of that kind. It shall not be done, sir. I say again, sir, and I wish those gentlemen to know it, that no man ever did such honor to his country abroad as old Ben. Franklin, who wore his homespun blue woolen stockings, and all Paris loved him for it. Go on, sir, as you have begun. Have these things done—not meanly—but plain and simple, conformable to our republican principles. This Mr. —, I believe, is a Frenchman. He has foreign notions. He has got his appointment ; but if he had not got it, I do not say he would. A king, indeed ! What's a king, that he should receive things in this splendid style ? We ought to have things done in the best, plain, unpretending manner, and no other ; and so, sir, have them done. Now, sir, you know my views, and the Secretary of State's also, for his views are mine in these things. Therefore go on as you deem right, religiously, and fear not. Say to the commissioner that I do not approve these extravagances. When he arrives in Europe he may have them fixed according to his notions, at his own expense, not the government's. Heaven and earth may come together, but Andrew Jackson will never swerve from principle."

"I am proud, General," said I, "to have your approbation of my course. There is just one other remark that I would like to make, with your permission."

"Proceed, sir," said the President, with the air of a man ordering a charge of cavalry.

"This commissioner," said I, "is a man of power and reputation. I am, as you are aware, in a position very different from his. It seems to me that, like a cockboat encountering a seventy-four, I shall be swamped. He is, besides, a friend of the Secretary of State. I never knew an instance of a subordinate getting on in any other way than by deferring to the wishes of his chief."

"No exception to that rule?" he asked, with one of his knowing looks.

"I have never known one," I replied.

"I think there *are* exceptions, Mr. Clark. I *think* there are. I *believe* you will not be swamped on this occasion, Mr. Cockboat. Any communication you may receive from the Secretary of State, during his absence, bring to me."

I took leave, returned to my office, and immediately wrote to the commissioner the following letter :

"SIR—The President, in a conversation with me this morning, directed me to inform you that he did not authorize, but expressly forbade, that the port-folio books relating to the Northeast Boundary for the arbitrator, the King of the Netherlands, should be done in any other manner than that of plain, republican simplicity; remarking, at the same time, that no difference should exist between those destined for the King and any others that emanate from the government. He happily illustrated his ideas on this subject, by the expression that, in his opinion, Benjamin Franklin, in his blue stockings, was no disgrace to his country. During the conversation I had with him, he directed me to say to you, that he wished every thing of the kind done in the best plain and substantial manner, and not according to foreign ideas of such things, and expressly directed me in this case to have them done in that manner. Understanding from you that these documents must be completed with dispatch, they will be done in the manner described in the shortest time possible. I am, etc.,

"X. CLARK."

I luckily kept a copy of this epistle. I say luckily, for a

day or two after, upon going to the President upon other business, I found him cool and reserved toward me. I asked him the reason.

"You have written an abusive letter to the commissioner," said he.

"No, General, I have not. I wrote him just such a letter as you directed, and here is a copy of it."

He read the letter and said it expressed his ideas exactly, and he was perfectly satisfied with it. His good humor was restored, and he again told me to bring to him any letter I might receive from the Secretary of State. It happened that I received from the Secretary a note the very next day, which read as follows: "Dear sir—Please tell my housekeeper that I shall be at home on Tuesday." Having occasion to visit the President that afternoon, I informed him that I had received from the Secretary of State a communication. He read it.

"Why," said he, "this has nothing to do with the matter in hand."

"No, General; but your words were, 'Bring me any letter you may receive from the Secretary;' you made no exception."

"Right, right, sir," said the President; "I see you are a military man."

The time came, at length, when I, too, was a suitor for presidential favor, and I venture to say that no one has ever obtained a lucrative office more easily and unexpectedly than I did. By accident I heard of the vacancy one mail before any one else in Washington. It was an office that secured to a prudent incumbent not income merely, but competence; one of those city places the fees of which had been fixed when the city was a small town. The mere growth of the city had rendered this office one of the best things in the gift of the federal government. In twenty-four hours there would have been fifty applicants for it—in a week, two hundred.

I went straightway to the President's office, and addressed him in words like these:

“General, the no-matter-what-ship of New York is vacant. You will be notified of the fact to-morrow morning. It was long ago understood between you and myself, that the straightforward way of doing business was the best, and I will proceed in that way upon the present occasion. I will ask you two questions. Do you consider me competent to discharge the duties of that office?”

“I do,” said the President.

“Will you give me the appointment?”

“I will,” was his instantaneous reply.

And he did. My name was sent to the Senate immediately. The nomination was confirmed, and I was soon at my new post, to the great astonishment of several worthy gentlemen who were striving, with might and main, by night and day, to secure the place for themselves. At the expiration of my term of four years, I went to Washington and asked a reappointment in precisely the same manner, and received for answer the same emphatic and instantaneous “I will,” as before. On this occasion, the private secretary being busy, he requested me to write my own nomination. I did so, but as it was deemed best that the document should go to the Senate in the usual hand-writing, Major Donelson copied it, and sent it to the capitol.

The General invited me to dinner. I had sent him some months before, a barrel of hickory nuts, and after dinner he said to a servant,

“Bring some of Mr. Clark’s hickory nuts.”

“I am flattered, General,” said I, “that you should remember it.”

“Oh,” said he, “I never forget my friends.”

At the table, I observed, every guest was provided with two forks, one of steel, the other of silver. The President adhered to the primitive metal.

Mr. Forsyth was then Secretary of State. I called upon him, and informed him of my reappointment, and that my name was then before the Senate.

“Have you called upon your Senators?” he asked.



"I have not," was my innocent reply ; "I did not suppose it necessary."

"Oh, no," said he, "it is not *necessary*. If General Jackson says so, that's enough. There's no Secretary of State, no Senate, no any body—if General Jackson has made up his mind."

Mr. Van Buren, who was sitting near, laughed. Mr. Forsyth laughed, I laughed, we performed a laughing trio ; in the midst of which I took my leave, well assured in my own mind, that I had the best of the joke.

Four years later, however, Mr. Van Buren being President, I took a slightly different view of the matter. As the expiration of my second term drew near, I employed all the usual arts, and some of the unusual ones, to secure a reappointment, and entertained confident hopes of success. Indeed, I felt assured of it, and had reason to do so, though from the President himself I had heard nothing. My second term expired, and still I had learnt nothing of the fate of my application. The next morning, at 10 o'clock precisely, a gentleman entered my office, and, presenting his commission, informed me, with the utmost politeness, that I was no longer in the service of the government, and that I saw before me that dread being—terror of all office-holders—A SUCCESSOR !

I have seen many heads taken off in my time, but never one quite so neatly as my own.

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## CHAPTER XX .

### FIRST BLOW AT THE BANK.

THE people of the United States came naturally enough by their old distrust of paper-money and banks. As early as 1690, we read in the old *News-Letters*, it required, in the village of New York, two paper dollars to buy one silver one. The colonists had been disastrously fighting the French in

Canada, and paying expenses in paper. In 1745, the great and famous expedition against Louisburgh, in Cape Breton, was paid for partly in the same unsubstantial coin, which had so depreciated in 1748 that to get one hundred pounds in gold it was necessary to give—

In Massachusetts' paper,	.	.	.	.	.	1,100 pounds.
" New York "	.	.	.	.	.	190 "
" East Jersey "	.	.	.	.	.	190 "
" West Jersey "	.	.	.	.	.	180 "
" Pennsylvania "	.	.	.	.	.	180 "
" Maryland "	.	.	.	.	.	200 "
" Virginia "	.	.	.	.	.	125 "
" North Carolina "	.	.	.	.	.	1,000 "
" South Carolina "	.	.	.	.	.	700 "

The torrents of paper-money issued during the revolutionary war, which sunk in value to nothing, converted the old prejudice against paper promises-to-pay into an aversion that had the force of an instinct. To this instinctive aversion, as much as to the constitutional objections urged by Mr. Jefferson and his disciples, was owing the difficulty experienced by Alexander Hamilton in getting his first United States bank chartered. Hence, also, the refusal of Congress to recharter that bank in 1811. Hence the unwillingness of Mr. Madison to sanction the charter of the second bank of the United States in 1816. But the bank was chartered in 1816, and went into existence with the approval of all the great republican leaders, opposed only by the extreme Jeffersonians and by the few federalists who were in public life. Yes, the federalists, among whom was Daniel Webster. They opposed it ostensibly because of some of the provisions of the charter which they deemed unwise ; the real ground of opposition being that it was a republican measure, designed to relieve the country from some of the financial evils aggravated by the late war.

But, long before General Jackson came into power, the bank appeared to have lived down all opposition. In the presidential campaign of 1824 it was not so much as mentioned, nor was it mentioned in that of 1828. In all the

political pamphlets, volumes, newspapers, campaign papers, burlesques, and caricatures of those years, there is not the most distant allusion to the bank as a political issue. The bank had become a universally accepted fact. General Jackson himself, though naturally averse to paper money—an opponent of Hamilton's bank in 1797, and not an advocate for that of 1816—had yet advised the establishment of a branch at Pensacola, and had signed a certificate in 1828, recommending certain persons for president and cashier of the branch at Nashville.\*

At the beginning of the administration of General Jackson, the bank of the United States was a truly imposing institution. Its capital was thirty-five millions. The public money deposited in its vaults averaged six or seven millions ; its private deposits, six millions more ; its circulation, twelve millions ; its discounts, more than forty millions a year ; its annual profits, more than three millions. Besides the parent bank at Philadelphia, with its marble palace and hundred clerks, there were twenty-five branches in the towns and cities of the Union, each of which had its president, cashier, and board of directors. The employées of the bank were more than five hundred in number, all men of standing and influence, all liberally salaried. In every county of the Union, in every nation on the globe, were stockholders of the bank of the United States. One-fifth of its stock was owned by foreigners. One-fourth of its stock was held by women, orphans, and the trustees of charity funds—so high, so unquestioned was its credit. Its bank-notes were as good as gold in every part of the country. From Maine to Georgia, from Georgia to Astoria, a man could travel and pass these notes at every point without discount. Nay, in London, Paris, Rome, Cairo, Calcutta, St. Petersburg, the notes of the bank of the United States were worth a fraction more or a fraction less than their value at home, according to the current rate of exchange. They could usually be sold at a

\* Memoirs of Hugh L. White.

premium at the remotest commercial centers. It was not uncommon for the stock of the bank to be sold at a premium of forty per cent. The directors of this bank were twenty-five in number, of whom five were appointed by the President of the United States. The bank and its branches received and disbursed the entire revenue of the nation.

At the head of this great establishment was the once renowned Nicholas Biddle. To his pen Mr. Biddle owed his conspicuous position. A graduate of Princeton—a student of law in Philadelphia—secretary of legation at Paris, first under General Armstrong, then under Mr. Monroe—afterward Philadelphia lawyer and editor of a literary magazine—author of the “Commercial Digest,” prepared at the request of President Monroe—unsuccessful candidate for Congress. In 1819 Mr. Monroe appointed him Government Director of the Bank of the United States, in which office he exhibited so much vivacity and intelligence, that, in 1823, he was elected president of the institution by a unanimous vote. It was a pity. Mr. Biddle was a man of the pen—quick, graceful, fluent, honorable, generous, but not practically able ; not a man for a stormy sea and a lee shore. The practically able man is not fluent of tongue or pen. The man who can not, to save his soul, sell a cargo of cotton at a profit, is your man to write brilliant articles on the cotton trade. In ordinary times, Mr. Biddle would have doubtless been able to retain his title of the Emperor Nicholas, of which he was a little vain, and to conduct his bank along the easy path with general applause. But he fell upon evil days, and the pen that made him ruined him.

He was one of those charioteers with whose magnificent driving no fault can be found, except that, at last, *it upsets the coach*. How many such charioteers there are in this world !

There is a tradition in Washington to this day, that General Jackson came up from Tennessee to Washington, in 1829, resolved on the destruction of the Bank of the United States, and that he was only dissuaded from aiming a para-

graph at it in his inaugural address by the prudence of Mr. Van Buren. No less distinguished a person than Mr. Bancroft has fallen into this error.\*

General Jackson had no thought of the bank until he had been President two months. He came to Washington expecting to serve but a single term, during which the question of re-chartering the bank was not expected to come up. The bank was chartered in 1816 for twenty years, which would not expire until 1836, three years after General Jackson hoped to be at the Hermitage once more, never to leave it. The first intercourse, too, between the bank and the new administration was in the highest degree courteous and agreeable. A large payment was to be made of the public debt early in the summer, and the manner in which the bank managed that affair, at some loss and much inconvenience to itself, but greatly to the advantage of the public and to the credit of the government, won from the Secretary of the Treasury a warm eulogium. "I am fully sensible," wrote Mr. Ingham to Mr. Biddle, on the 6th of June, "of the disposition of the bank to afford all practicable facility to the fiscal operations of the government, and the offers contained in your letters with that view are duly appreciated. As you have expressed the willingness of the bank to make the funds of the Treasury immediately available at the various points where they may be required for the approaching payment of the debt, the drafts for effecting the transfers for that object will be made to suit the convenience of the bank as far as the demands of other branches of the service will permit." And, on the 19th of June, when the business had been nearly done, he added: "I can not close this communication without ex-

\* In his eulogy of General Jackson, pronounced at Washington, in June, 1845, Mr. Bancroft said: "He came to the presidency of the United States resolved to deliver the government from the Bank of the United States, and to restore the regulation of exchanges to the rightful depository of that power—the commerce of the country. He had designed to declare his views on this subject in his inaugural address, but was persuaded to relinquish that purpose, on the ground that it belonged rather to a legislative message."

pressing the satisfaction of the department at the arrangements which the bank has made for effecting these payments in a manner so accommodating to the Treasury, and so little embarrassing to the community." And when all was over, the Secretary again expressed his gratitude and admiration.

But while this affair was going on so pleasantly, trouble was brewing in another quarter. Isaac Hill, from New Hampshire, then second Comptroller of the Treasury, was a great man at the White House. He had a grievance. Jeremiah Mason, one of the three great lawyers of New England, a Federalist, a friend of Daniel Webster and of Mr. Adams, had been appointed to the presidency of the branch of the United States Bank at Portsmouth, New Hampshire—much to the disgust of Isaac Hill and other Jackson men of that little State. Isaac Hill desired the removal of Mr. Mason and the appointment in his place of a gentleman who was a friend of the new administration.

That the reader may see the movements of this gentleman as they appeared to General Jackson, and that he may fully understand the process by which the administration were brought into collision with the parent bank, I will present here a brief condensation of the papers and letters relating to the "Portsmouth affair," in the order in which they were produced. The correspondence began in June and ended in October. I believe myself warranted in the positive assertion, that this correspondence relating to the desired removal of Jeremiah Mason was the direct and real cause of the destruction of the bank. If the bank had been complaisant enough to remove a faithful servant, General Jackson, I am convinced, would never have opposed the rechartering of the institution.

June 27. A petition, signed by fifty-eight citizens of Portsmouth, New Hampshire, was addressed to the Directors of the Bank of the United States. It states that the Portsmouth branch has been conducted in a manner "partial, harsh, novel, and injurious to the interest of the bank;" and that the president of the branch is the guilty person. Asks

his removal, and the appointment of a president and board of directors acquainted with the business necessities of Portsmouth, and disposed to dispense the favors of the bank impartially.

June 29. A similar petition from Portsmouth, signed by fifty-six members of the New Hampshire legislature. It states that small, safe loans have been refused to business men in Portsmouth, while, at the same time, large sums were loaned out of the State at greater risk ; and that the course pursued by the President was "destructive to the business of Portsmouth and offensive to the whole community." Asks the removal of the president and directors, and the appointment of others named in the petition.

June 27. Levi Woodbury, of New Hampshire, United States Senator, to Mr. Ingham, Secretary of the Treasury. Marked "Confidential." Repeats the complaints of the petitions. Adds that Jeremiah Mason is *a particular friend of Mr. Webster*, who was supposed to have had much to do with procuring his appointment ; that the appointment, unpopular at first, has now become odious through Mr. Mason's ungracious manners and partial, vacillating conduct. Advises the prompt removal of the president and directors, if it can be effected. P. S. "I understand the board is selected for this branch early in July"—next month.

July 11. S. D. Ingham to Nicholas Biddle. Encloses Mr. Woodbury's letter, and says that similar complaints have been received from Kentucky and Louisiana. Adds, that the administration would learn with extreme regret that political relationship had any influence upon the granting or withholding of bank facilities. Compliments the parent bank highly upon the manner in which it has discharged its trust "in all its immediate relations to the government."

July 17. Isaac Hill to J. N. Barker and John Pemberton of Philadelphia. Encloses the two New Hampshire petitions and asks Messrs. Barker and Pemberton to hand them to the president of the bank. Admits that the movement originated in a suggestion of his own. Endorses all the

statements of the petitions. Concludes by saying, that the "friends of General Jackson have had but too much reason to complain of the branch bank at Portsmouth ;" that all they now want is, that it "may not continue to be an engine of political oppression ;" and that, of the ten persons proposed in the legislative petition for directors, six are Jackson men and four Adams men. Mr. Hill quotes a private letter from Portsmouth, which accuses Mr. Mason of being "unaccommodating to pensioners," of making large loans to his brother-in-law at Boston, while "refusing to accommodate our merchants with two or three thousand dollars, and this, too, on the very best paper."

July 18. Nicholas Biddle to S. D. Ingham. "Confidential." Acknowledges the receipt of the secretary's letter enclosing that of Senator Woodbury. States that the letter has been submitted to the directors of the parent bank, who will investigate Mr. Woodbury's allegations, and, if they are substantiated, apply "an appropriate corrective." Meanwhile, in justice to Mr. Mason, he will say, of his own knowledge, that neither politics nor Mr. Webster suggested the selection of Mr. Mason. Mr. Webster did not even know of the nomination of Mr. Mason, until after it was made. Quotes a recent letter of Mr. Woodbury to himself, in which Mr. Woodbury says: "It is notorious that the charges against Mr. Mason in his present office *originated exclusively with his political friends*, and it was not till they created a personal rancor and inflamed condition of the public mind, seldom if ever before witnessed in this region, that others interposed from a supposed danger to the interests of both the town and the bank." Mr. Biddle gave a short history of Mr. Mason's appointment :

"The office at Portsmouth had originally the misfortune to have at its head a Mr. Cutts, who ended by defrauding the United States of upward of \$20,000 of the pension fund, which the bank was obliged to replace, and last year the office was nearly prostrated in the general ruin which spread over that country. Out of \$460,000 of loans, \$148,000 was thrown under protest; still further protests were expected, and the actual loss sustained



there will not be less than \$112,000. At this period, the late president, a worthy man, but not calculated for such a state of things, resigned his place, and it became necessary at once to adopt the most energetic measures to save the property of the bank. A confidential officer was dispatched to Portsmouth, who found the affairs of the office in great jeopardy, covered with the wrecks which bad management and the most extensive frauds had occasioned. To retrieve it, it became necessary to select a man of first rate character and abilities; such a man was Mr. Mason. Of his entire competency, especially in detecting the complicated frauds, and managing the numerous law suits which seemed inevitable, there could be no doubt. Of his political opinions, we neither knew nor inquired any thing. In order to induce him to give up so much of his valuable time to the service of the bank, an estimate was made of the probable amount which we would have to pay for the professional services of a lawyer, and, by engaging Mr. Mason in that character, we were enabled to obtain his consent to accept the appointment. Since he has been in office, he has been exceedingly useful—has saved the bank from great losses—has secured the bad debts—nor, until Mr. Woodbury's letter, was I informed of any complaint against him. What is, moreover, to be much considered, is, that while he has been gradually reducing the old accommodation loans, he has actually increased the amount of the general loans of the office."

Mr. Biddle added, that he was inclined to attribute the clamor against Mr. Mason to his vigor in enforcing the payment of the old protested notes. He appended a long statement, showing that the bank had never been influenced in the bestowal of its favors by political considerations, and declaring that it never should be.

July 23d. S. D. Ingham to Nicholas Biddle. A well-written and ingenious letter in reply to Mr. Biddle's last. The secretary remarked that he was not prepared for such a sweeping assertion as that of Mr. Biddle, when he said that since the founding of the bank, no loan was ever granted or withheld through political partiality or hostility. Human nature being what it is, it was not credible that five hundred men, not selected by Omniscience, had been wholly exempt in all cases from the bias of party feelings. Mr. Biddle's assertion he therefore received "rather as evidence of Mr. Biddle's own feelings than as conclusive proof of the fact so confidently vouched for." The secretary would not assume the

truth of the Portsmouth charges, but he *did* object "to a course of action which either resists inquiry, or, what is of the same tendency, *enters upon it with a full persuasion that it is not called for.*"

July 31. Jeremiah Mason to Nicholas Biddle. Informs Mr. Biddle that Isaac Hill is endeavoring to remove the pension agency from the branch bank at Portsmouth to Concord, Hill's object being to "benefit a small bank at Concord, of which, till his removal to Washington, he was the president." Says that though Concord is more central, Portsmouth is more convenient to a majority of the pensioners ; and that, as the disbursements to pensioners amount to eighty thousand dollars a year, the removal of the agency will be a great loss to the branch bank. Thinks it can not be done legally. Mr. Mason concluded by saying he had heard that complaints of his official conduct had been forwarded to the parent bank, and that he desired to be informed what they were. "If," said he, "the memorial and letters contain all the absurd untruths that were made use of to obtain signers to them, they must be extraordinary productions."

August 3. John H. Eaton, Secretary of War, to Jeremiah Mason. States that "it has been found necessary" to remove the pension agency from Portsmouth to Concord, and that a pension agent has been appointed to reside at Concord. Requests Mr. Mason to deliver into the custody of that agent all the books, papers, and money belonging to the pension agency.

August 10. Jeremiah Mason to Nicholas Biddle. Encloses the order of the Secretary of War for the transfer of the pension agency books, and says that, considering the order illegal, he thinks he shall not obey it until authorized to do so by the parent bank. "The Secretary of War," he remarks, "has no control over the navy and privateer funds, and yet it seems by his letter that the order to transfer them, with the invalid and revolutionary funds, is to come from him. No intimation is given of any direction of the President of the United States for doing this."

August 13. Jeremiah Mason to Nicholas Biddle. Says that the newly appointed Concord pension agent has presented himself at the branch bank at Portsmouth, and formally demanded the books. Mr. Mason had refused to give them up, and informed the agent that he must wait for instructions from the parent bank. In consequence of this movement, the pensions, then just due, would not be paid.

August 17. T. Cadwallader, acting president of the bank of the United States, to Jeremiah Mason. (Mr. Biddle being absent from Philadelphia, and on his way to Portsmouth, where he intended to investigate personally the charges against Mr. Mason, the instructions of the parent board were communicated to Mr. Mason by the acting president.) "You are instructed," said Mr. Cadwallader, "respectfully to inform the Secretary of War that no such authority as he claims is perceived in the acts of Congress ; and that, as the bank must act under legal responsibility, you must request him to have the goodness to point out whence his authority is derived, stating that, to prevent inconvenience to the government, as well as to individuals, the payments to the pensioners will be continued as heretofore, until a further communication shall have been received from him, and submitted to the parent board."

August 25. James L. Edwards, pension clerk in the War Department, to Jeremiah Mason. States that the Secretary of War was absent from Washington, not anticipating any difficulty in the transfer of the pension agency. Requests Mr. Mason to go on paying the pensions as usual, and when Major Eaton returns the affair will be disposed of by him.

September 15. Nicholas Biddle to S. D. Ingham. This was the letter which finally and fatally embroiled the bank of the United States with General Jackson's administration. It was an honest, able, right, imprudent letter. Mr. Biddle had spent six days at Portsmouth, and had satisfied himself and satisfied the directors that the charges against Mr. Mason were "entirely groundless." "The most zealous of Mr.

Mason's enemies did not venture to assert that he had ever, on any occasion, been influenced by political feelings, and this public opinion, so imposing in the mist of distance, degenerated into the personal hostility of a very limited, and, for the most part, very prejudiced circle. *Mr. Mason was, therefore, immediately re-elected.*"

Having stated this result of the investigation, the president of the bank proceeded to declare the judgment of the bank upon the principles involved in the pending dispute. The bank, in effect, defied the administration.

"Presuming," said Mr. Biddle, "that we have rightly apprehended your views, and fearful that the silence of the bank might be hereafter misconstrued into an acquiescence in them, I deem it my duty to state to you in a manner perfectly respectful to your official and personal character, yet so clear as to leave no possibility of misconception, that the board of directors of the Bank of the United States, and the boards of directors of the branches of the Bank of the United States, acknowledge not the slightest responsibility of any description whatsoever to the Secretary of the Treasury touching the political opinions and conduct of their officers, that being a subject on which they never consult, and never desire to know, the views of any administration. It is with much reluctance the board of directors feel themselves constrained to make this declaration. But charged as they are by Congress with duties of great importance to the country, which they can hope to execute only while they are exempted from all influences not authorized by the laws, they deem it most becoming to themselves, as well as to the Executive, to state with perfect frankness their opinion of any interference in the concerns of the institution confided to their care." . . .

October 8. S. D. Ingham to Nicholas Biddle. Mr. Ingham's reply is as long as a president's message. He expends pages in endeavoring to show that Mr. Biddle had misstated some of his previous positions, and other pages in saying how good and pleasant a thing it is to see a Secretary of the Treasury and a president of the United States Bank dwelling

together in unity. The substantial meaning of his letter is this : “ Mr. Biddle, you are altogether too touchy ; instead of resenting suggestions from the Secretary of the Treasury, you ought to welcome them.”

One paragraph of Mr. Ingham’s letter contains a threat, to which subsequent events gave significance, though at the time it made but a slight impression : “ The administration is empowered to *act* upon the bank in various ways : in the appointment or removal of five of the directors ; *in the withdrawing of the public deposits* ; in the exaction of weekly statements, and the inspection of its general accounts ; and in all the modes incident to the management of the pecuniary collections and disbursements of the government. That these opportunities of action might be perverted and abused is conceivable, but, subjected to the principle on which we early and cordially agreed, they become causes of security and benefit ; and before I dismiss this branch of the subject, I take the occasion to say, if it should ever appear to the satisfaction of the Secretary of the Treasury that the bank used its pecuniary power for purposes of injustice and oppression, he would be faithless to his trust if he hesitated to lessen its capacity for such injury, by withdrawing from its vaults the public deposits.”

The conclusion of Mr. Ingham’s long letter was as follows : “ No one can more fervently desire than I do, that the bank shall, in all its ramifications, be absolutely independent of party ; that it shall so conduct its affairs as to accomplish every purpose for which it was intended, and stand above the reach of the least plausible suspicion. No one can see with more unalloyed satisfaction its flourishing condition, or has borne more cheerful testimony to the character of its present management. Having labored ardently to create it, I may not be supposed the first to contaminate or decry it ; but, however imposing its attitude, if once satisfied that the powers of its charter and the resources of its wealth are debased and perverted to practices at war with the liberties of the country, and the rights and interests of my

fellow-citizens, no consideration of a personal nature will curb me in exercising the legal power with which I may be invested, to check its tendencies and reform its abuses ; and it will be my care not less than my duty, never to surrender any of the rights vested in the government for this purpose."

October 9. Nicholas Biddle to S. D. Ingham. In this letter, which concluded the correspondence, Mr. Biddle explained some passages of his former letters, and heartily responded to the Secretary's desire that the bank should be totally independent of party.

So the Bank of the United States triumphed over Isaac Hill, Mr. Woodbury, and the administration. It was a dear victory.

The reader has perused the previous pages of this work to little purpose if he does not know what effect upon the mind of the President the bank's calm defiance was certain to produce. Before the next month closed, the editors of the *New York Courier and Enquirer* received a confidential hint from Washington, that the forthcoming Presidential Message would take ground against the Bank of the United States. So says Mr. James Gordon Bennett, who was then the active, working man of that great newspaper.

"For a considerable time," says Mr. Bennett, "after I joined the *Courier and Enquirer* in 1829, and the greater portion of which journal I then wrote with my own hand—and up to the year 1830, it presented no particular hostility to the United States Bank. I think it was in the month of November, 1829, when M. M. Noah was Surveyor of the Port, that in going to his office one day, I found him reading a letter which he had just received from Amos Kendall, and which informed him that ground would be taken against the Bank by General Jackson in the message to be delivered the next month on the opening of Congress. On the same day, a portion of Amos Kendall's letter, with a head and tail put to it, was sent over to the *Courier* office, and published as an

editorial next morning. This was the first savage attack on the United States Bank in the columns of the *Courier and Enquirer*."

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## CHAPTER XXI.

### CONGRESS MEETS.

GENERAL JACKSON prepared his Messages very much as the editor of a metropolitan journal "gets up" his thundering leaders; only not quite so expeditiously. He used to begin to think about his Message three or four months before the meeting of Congress. Whenever he had "an idea," he would make a brief memorandum of it on any stray piece of paper that presented itself, and put it into his capacious white hat for safe keeping. By the time it became necessary to put the document into shape, he would have a large accumulation of these memoranda, some of them consisting of a few words on the margin of a newspaper, and some of a page or two of foolscap. These were all confided to the hands of Major Donelson, the President's faithful and diligent private secretary, whose duty it was to write them out into orderly and correct English. Thus was formed the basis of the Message, to which the members of the Cabinet added each his proportion. It is not difficult, in reading over the volume of General Jackson's Messages, to detect the traces of the General's own large steel pen.

Congress met on the seventh of December. Such was the strength of the administration in the House of Representatives, that Andrew Stephenson was re-elected to the Speakership by one hundred and fifty-two votes out of one hundred and ninety-one. This Congress, however, came in with the administration, and had been elected when General Jackson was elected.

The Message, eagerly looked for, as a first Message always

is, was delivered on the day following that of the organization of the House. A calm deliberateness of tone marked this important paper. If any where the hand of the chief was particularly apparent, it was where, on opening the subject of the foreign relations, in the midst of friendly declarations and confident hopes of a peaceful settlement of all points in dispute, the President observed that, the country being blessed with every thing which constitutes national strength, he should ask nothing of foreign governments that was not right, and submit to nothing that was wrong ; flattering himself, he said, that, aided by the intelligence and patriotism of the people, we shall be able to cause all our just rights to be respected. After this Jacksonian ripple, the Message flowed on with Van Buren placidity to its close.

But who would have thought to find, in a first Message of Andrew Jackson, Great Britain singled out for compliment ? “ With Great Britain,” said the Message, “ alike distinguished in peace and war, we may look forward to years of peaceful, honorable, and elevated competition. Every thing in the condition and history of the two nations is calculated to inspire sentiments of mutual respect, and to carry conviction to the minds of both, that it is their policy to preserve the most cordial relations. Such are my own views ; and it is not to be doubted that such are also the prevailing sentiments of our constituents.” What does this mean ? We shall see ere long.

The Message recommended that all “ intermediate agency” in the election of the President and Vice-President shall be abolished, and the service of the President limited to a single term of four or six years. One passage in this part of the Message was, doubtless, designed to be particularly interesting to Mr. Clay and his friends. In case the election, through the number of candidates, devolves upon the House of Representatives, remarked the President, the will of the people may not be always ascertained, or, if ascertained, may not be regarded. Circumstances may give the power of deciding the election to a single individual. “ *May he not be tempted to*



*name his reward ?*" In any case, thought the President, it is worthy of consideration, whether representatives should not be disqualified from holding office under a President of their own electing.

In two brief, pregnant paragraphs, every sentence a distinct proposition, and every proposition an error, the message defended the course of the government in its removals and appointments. The leading ideas of this passage were, that a long tenure of office is almost necessarily corrupting ; that an office-holder has no more right to his office than the office-seeker ; and that if any one had a right to complain of a removal from office it was *not* the luckless individual who had been suddenly deprived of the means of subsistence without cause.

The tariff was referred to with the vagueness unavoidable by a writer who was a protectionist in principle and a free-trader from necessity. The late tariff, said the message, had neither injured agriculture and commerce, nor benefited manufacturers, as much as had been anticipated ; but "some modifications" were desirable, which should be considered and discussed not as party or sectional questions. The time was near at hand when the public debt would be all discharged. The gradual reduction and speedy abolition of the duties on tea and coffee were, therefore, recommended.

The finances of the country were in a satisfactory condition. Nearly six millions in the treasury ; receipts for the year 1830 estimated at twenty-four millions six hundred thousand dollars ; expenditures to be little more than twenty-six millions. Nearly twelve and a half millions of the public debt had been paid during the year, leaving only forty-eight and a half millions. When this debt shall have been discharged, the President continued, *then* will arise the great question, whether the surplus revenue should not be apportioned among the several States for works of public utility, and thus put to rest for ever the long-vexed question of internal improvements. In connection with this subject there was an emphatic declaration : "Nothing is clearer, in my

view, than that we are chiefly indebted for the success of the constitution under which we are now acting to the watchful and auxiliary operation of the State authorities. This is not the reflection of a day, but belongs to the most deeply rooted convictions of my mind. I can not, therefore, too strongly or too earnestly for my own sense of its importance, warn you against all encroachments upon the legitimate sphere of State sovereignty."

The message suggested the formation of a Home Department to relieve the pressure on the Department of State.

The policy of the government on the Cherokee question was clearly foreshadowed. The Cherokees were given to understand that an independent sovereignty within the bounds of a sovereign State could not, in any circumstances whatever, be tolerated, and Congress was advised to set apart an ample district west of the Mississippi for the permanent occupancy of such tribes as could be induced to emigrate thither. "But," added the President, "this emigration should be voluntary; for it would be as cruel as unjust to compel the aborigines to abandon the graves of their fathers, and seek a home in a distant land."

Near the close of the message were the famous little paragraphs which sounded the first note of war against the United States Bank:

"The charter of the Bank of the United States expires in 1836, and its stockholders will most probably apply for a renewal of their privileges. In order to avoid the evils resulting from precipitancy in a measure involving such important principles, and such deep pecuniary interests, I feel that I can not, in justice to the parties interested, too soon present it to the deliberate consideration of the legislature and the people. Both the constitutionality and the expediency of the law creating this bank are well questioned by a large portion of our fellow-citizens; and it must be admitted by all, that it has failed in the great end of establishing a uniform and sound currency. Under these circumstances, if such an institution is deemed essential to the fiscal operations of the government, I submit to the wisdom of the legislature whether a national one, founded, upon the credit of the government and its revenues, might not be devised, which would avoid all constitutional difficulties; and, at the same time, secure all the advantages

to the government and country that were expected to result from the present bank."

The President did not enumerate among the advantages of the bank which he suggested, that it would add to the patronage of a democratic administration. Such a bank as he proposed would be merely an appendage to the Treasury Department, and all its employées would be as much at the mercy of the government as a treasury-clerk.

Such was the message ; in which the *fortiter in re* was so happily veiled by the *suaviter in modo*. It was, upon the whole, a candid and straightforward document. It gave no uncertain sound. The glove was fairly thrown down, though thrown with a certain grace, and the glove of finer kid than usual. What was thus plainly announced as the policy of the administration was carried out with a consistency and resolution rarely paralleled.

The debates began. No president ever watched the proceedings of Congress with more attention than President Jackson. Nothing escaped him. No matter to how late an hour of the night the debates were protracted, he never went to sleep till Major Lewis or Major Donelson came from the capitol and told him what had been said and done there. We must note such events of the session as were of particular interest to him.

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## CHAPTER XXII.

### INCIDENTS OF THE SESSION.

THE proceedings of the Senate were the first to kindle the President's ire. The Senate was not so disposed to confirm as the President had been to appoint. The executive sessions, that had previously been so short and so harmonious, were now protracted and exciting. Sometimes the Senate

was engaged for several days (once five days) in succession in the single business of confirming the nominations that were sent in from the presidential mansion. Some of the nominations were in the Senate for several months without being reached.

Although the proceedings in executive session are secret, many of the Senate's executive acts during this session were such as could not be concealed. A large number of the nominations were opposed, and several, upon which the President had set his heart, were rejected. No less than twenty-one Senators voted against the confirmation of Henry Lee, among whom were six of General Jackson's most intimate friends and most decided partisans. Edward Livingston, Thomas H. Benton, Felix Grundy, R. Y. Hayne, Levi Woodbury, and Hugh L. White, voted against him. Seven others of the President's nominations were rejected by majorities less decided ; and several more escaped rejection only by a vote or two.

The most remarkable case of rejection was that of Isaac Hill. It was also the one that gave the President the deepest offense, and which he avenged most promptly and most strikingly. The pretext for Mr. Hill's rejection was, that in the course of the late campaign he had libeled Mrs. Adams. He denied the charge, averring that, in his capacity of publisher, he had merely published a book of European travel that contained the aspersions complained of.

It was not unreasonable for General Jackson to conclude, and it is not unfair for us to conjecture, that it was Isaac Hill's conduct in the Portsmouth affair against the bank of the United States that caused a majority of the Senate to vote against his confirmation to the second comptrollership of the treasury. Mr. Hill, moreover, was a man of inferior presence, small and slight, lame and awkward. He was not the "style" of person whom Senators had been accustomed to see in high and responsible positions under the government.

The President set about righting the wrong which he

felt his friend had received with a tact and vigor all his own. A long communication was prepared at Washington for publication in the *New Hampshire Patriot*, calculated to make every Jackson man in the State regard the rejection of Isaac Hill as a personal affront. If Mr. Amos Kendall was not the author of this artful and forcible production, then I am sure Mr. Amos Kendall can tell us who was. "I assure you sir," said this anonymous writer, "*on my own personal knowledge*, that the President has entire confidence in Mr. Hill, and looks upon his rejection as a blow aimed at himself. He can not protect those whom he honors with appointments from combinations of designing men operating on the approving power ; but the people can. Enjoying the confidence and esteem of the President and his whole cabinet, Mr. Hill returns to you with pure hands and an honest heart. Those who have been defeated in their ambitious designs by his perseverance ; those who find the abuses by which they profited corrected by his vigilance ; those who wish to destroy General Jackson, defeat all reform, and plunge our government into the sea of corruptions from which it has been redeemed, exult in Mr. Hill's rejection. But the real friends of the President and his principles look to the people and legislature of New Hampshire to wipe away the stigma cast upon this just and true man, by the unjust and cruel vote of the Senate. Let them say, by an act so signal that it can not be misunderstood, whether the President did wrong in the appointment of Mr. Hill, and whether a man so distinguished for his virtues, his talents, and his services, is unworthy of public station."\*

Precisely so. The term of Mr. Senator Woodbury was about to expire. Waiving a reelection for reasons better known to himself than to the public, Mr. Woodbury lent his great influence in New Hampshire to the support of Isaac Hill for the seat in the Senate about to be vacated. Hill was taken up by the Jackson men in the State with prompt enthusiasm, and a large number of the other party joined in

\* Biography of Isaac Hill, p. 100.

the support of a man who was supposed to have been the victim of aristocratic pride and bank influence. He was elected by an unusual majority, and came back to Washington a member of the body that had deemed him unworthy of a far less elevated post. "Were we in the place of Isaac Hill," said the *Courier and Enquirer*, "we would reject the presidency of the United States, if attainable, to enjoy the supreme triumph, the pure, the unalloyed, the legitimate victory of stalking into that very Senate and taking our seat—of looking our enemies in the very eye—of saying to the men who violated their oaths by attempting to disfranchise citizens, "Give me room—stand back—do you know me? I am that Isaac Hill, of New Hampshire, who, in this very spot, you slandered, vilified, and stripped of his rights; the people, your *masters*, have sent me here to take my seat in this very chamber, as your equal and your peer."

By this election of Isaac Hill to the Senate several things were effected, some of which were peculiarly pleasing to General Jackson. Isaac Hill was more than reinstated. A restive Senate, a haughty bank, a hated Henry Clay, were rebuked and warned. New Hampshire was gratified, and *won*. Levi Woodbury was put in reserve for that place in the Cabinet which he had the rare fortune to retain for so many years. And all this was as purely the effect of Andrew Jackson's volition as though he had been autocrat instead of President.

The confirmation of Amos Kendall and Major Noah, two strong anti-bank men, was powerfully opposed in the Senate. The session was nearly at an end before their cases were decided. Daniel Webster, on the 9th of May, wrote to his friend Dutton: "On Monday we propose to take up Kendall and Noah. My expectation is that they will both be confirmed by the casting vote of the Vice-President, if the Senate should be full, as I think it will be. A week ago I was confident of their rejection, but one man who was relied on, will yield, I am fearful, to the importunities of friends and the dragooning of party. We have had a good deal of debate in closed session on these subjects, and sometimes pretty warm.

Some of the speeches, I suppose, will be hereafter published ; none of mine, however. Were it not for the fear of the outdoor popularity of General Jackson, the Senate would have negatived more than half his nominations. There is a burning fire of discontent, that must, I think, some day break out. When men go so far as to speak warmly against things which they yet feel bound to vote for, we may hope they will soon go a little further. No more of politics."

Mr. Noah was rejected by a vote of 25 to 23. Mr. Kendall was confirmed by the casting vote of the Vice-President.

The disgust and anger of the President at the conduct of the Senate in rejecting so many of his friends were extreme. General Duff Green afterward reported a conversation which he had with the President on the subject in the early part of this session :

*President*.—"I have sent for you that we may converse on the subject of my nominations before the Senate. It is time that you should let the people know that, instead of supporting me and my measures, Congress is engaged in President making."

*Editor*.—"I trust that you know that I would not hesitate to say so if I believed the public interest required it; but excuse me for saying that, before I can censure Congress for not supporting your measures, I should be possessed of the views of the administration, that I may be enabled to reply to those who ask to be informed what those measures are."

*President* (much excited).—"Look at my message, sir; you will find them there—in the message, sir."

*Editor*.—"Some of your best friends complain that your message is so general in its terms, that no special measure is recommended; and I believe that the want of concert among your friends is attributed to the fact that there is no concert in your Cabinet. There being no Cabinet councils, there is no one who feels authorized to recommend any measure upon the authority of the administration, because it is understood that no measures are considered and adopted as such. Your friends in Congress complain that you do not hold Cabinet councils."

*The President* (more excited).—"Let Congress go home, and the people will teach them the consequence of neglecting my measures and opposing my nominations. How did you obtain your popularity, sir, as an editor? Was it not by opposing Congress? Speak out to the people, sir, and tell them that Congress are engaged in intrigues for the presidency, instead of

supporting my measures, and the people will support you as they have done."

*Editor.*—"You complain that the Senate have not approved of your nominations. Will it not be unwise to anticipate the objections of that body? Your nominations may yet be approved; and if any should be rejected there may be reasons which would justify the Senate. If I were to assail the Senate, it would be attributed to your influence, and thus array against you the body itself, and those who deem it essential to preserve its independence. I can not know what impediments lie in the way of your nominations, and can not condemn until my judgment disproves."

*President.*—"The people, sir, the people will put these things to rights, and teach them what it is to oppose my nominations!"\*

The removal-and-appointment question was ably discussed in both houses during the session, and many plans were suggested for limiting the dread power of removal. But against so powerful an administrative majority in the house, nothing could be done on a question which was made a strictly party one, and by the proper adjustment of which the party in power could not but be a loser. Mr. Webster, it appears from his correspondence, had doubts whether the constitution gave the President the power to remove without the consent of the Senate. He consulted Chancellor Kent on the point, and the Chancellor's reply strengthened his doubt.

The bank of the United States enjoyed two triumphs during this session of Congress. The Committee of Ways and Means, to which was referred that part of the President's message that related to the bank, a committee headed by the distinguished Mr. McDuffie, of South Carolina, reported strongly in favor of the existing bank, and as strongly against the bank proposed by the President.

Later in the session, Mr. Potter, of North Carolina, introduced into the house four resolutions adverse to the bank. First, that the constitution conferred no power to create a bank; secondly, that if it had, the establishment of the bank was inexpedient; third, that paper-money and banks are in-

\* United States Telegraph.



jurious to the interests of labor, and dangerous to liberty ; fourth, that the house will not consent to the re-charter of the bank. These resolutions were immediately laid upon the table by the decisive and significant vote of eighty-nine to sixty-six. The President must proceed cautiously, therefore. He did proceed cautiously, but not the less resolutely. The bank exulted, and exulted openly ; but the bank was a doomed bank, notwithstanding.

The removal of all the southern Indians to a territory west of the Mississippi was a measure which General Jackson entirely approved, and upon which, indeed, he was resolved. It was much debated this winter, and most strenuously opposed. The philanthropic feelings of the country were aroused. The letter of many treaties was shown to be against the measure. The peaceful Society of Friends opposed it. A volume of the leading speeches in opposition to the removal was widely circulated. The opinions of great lawyers were adverse to it. It was, indeed, one of those wise and humane measures by which great good is done and great evil prevented, but which cause much immediate individual misery, and much grievous individual wrong. It was painful to contemplate the sad remnant of tribes that had been the original proprietors of the soil, leaving the narrow residue of their heritage, and taking up a long and weary march for strange and distant hunting-grounds. More painful it would have been to see those unfortunate tribes hemmed in on every side by hostile settlers, preyed upon by the white man's cupidity, the white man's vices, and the white man's diseases, until they perished from the face of the earth. Doomed to perish they are. But no one, I presume, has now any doubt that General Jackson's policy of removal, which he carried out cautiously, but unrelentingly, and not always without stratagem and management, has caused the inevitable process of extinction to go on with less anguish and less demoralization to the whites than if the Indians had been suffered to remain in the States of Georgia, Alabama, and Mississippi. To this part of the policy of General Jackson, praise little

qualified can be justly awarded. The "irrevocable logic of events" first decreed and then justified the removal of the Indians. Nor need we, at this late day, revive the sad details of a measure which, hard and cruel as it was then thought, is now universally felt to have been as kind as it was necessary.

I have had the advantage of conversing upon the Indian policy of General Jackson with the first authority in the land upon all subjects relating to the red man's mournful history—Mr. Henry R. Schoolcraft, of Washington. Mr. Schoolcraft did much service, under the General, as Indian Commissioner, in negotiating treaties. It was he who bought from the Indians, after a long winter of most tedious negotiation, a great part of what is now the State of Michigan. Said Mr. Schoolcraft :

"General Jackson was direct and explicit in giving instructions. He knew the white man, and he knew the red man, and he knew how each was accustomed to treat the other. When the United States bought the Michigan lands, crowds of white men came on to Washington with claims against the Indians for the United States to pay.

" 'Don't pay them one dollar,' said the General. 'Pay the Indians honorably for their lands, their full value, in silver—not blankets, not rifles, not powder, but hard cash ; and let their creditors collect their own debts. Don't you pay one of them, neither now nor at any future time. When white men deal with Indians, the Indians are sure to get into debt to the white men ; at least, the white men are sure to say so. I won't hear of paying any of their "claims." The rascals are here now, I suppose. The town will be full of them, but I won't pay a dollar, and you may tell them so.'

"In fact," added Mr. Schoolcraft, "every boarding-house in Washington contained some of these claimants ; a state of things which General Jackson only inferred from his own experience in Indian treaty-making. It was one of his canny guesses."

This was the session of Congress signalized by the great

debate between Mr. Hayne and Mr. Webster, the first of many debates upon nullification. The future readers of this discussion will be at a loss to discover, either in Mr. Foot's resolution that gave rise to it, or in Mr. Hayne's first speech upon that resolution, an adequate cause for Mr. Webster's magnificent explosions of eloquence. The source of his inspiration is to be sought in the unrecorded feeling of the hour. That tariff bill for which General Jackson had voted, followed as it was by a depression in the market for Southern produce had created in the Southern States an extreme and general discontent. Georgia, in the spring of 1829, had sent to Washington a solemn protest against the existing tariff, which Mr. Berrien presented to the Senate in an impressive speech. Both the protest and the speech, however, expressed the warmest devotion to the Union. But in South Carolina other language had been used. A distinguished citizen of that State had publicly said, that it was time for the South to begin to calculate the value of the Union ; and the remark had been hailed with what seemed, at a distance, to be general applause. In the chair of the Senate sat Mr. Calhoun, who was already regarded by Southern extremists as their predestined chief. There was a small, loud party in Washington who were already in the habit of giving utterance to sentiments with regard to the Union which, familiar as they are to us in 1859, thrilled with horror the patriotic spirits of thirty years ago.

In these circumstances, Mr. Samuel A. Foot, of Connecticut, introduced his harmless resolution to inquire into the expediency of suspending for a time the sale of the public lands. The debate upon this resolution, which has made it so memorable, was a brilliant accident, which surprised no one more than it surprised the eminent men who took the leading part in it. "The whole debate," wrote Mr. Webster to one of his friends, "was a matter of accident. I had left the court pretty late in the day, and went into the Senate with my court papers under my arm, just to see what was passing. It so happened that Mr. Hayne very soon rose in

his first speech. I did not like it, and my friends liked it less."

The entire offense of Mr. Hayne's speech is contained in one of its sentences, if not in a single phrase. "I am one of those," said Mr. Hayne, "who believe that the very life of our system is the independence of the States, and that there is no evil more to be deprecated than *the consolidation of this government*." This was the little matter that kindled so great a fire.

General Jackson, not yet believing that the doctrine of nullification was destined to become formidable, and being very friendly to Mr. Hayne, the brother of his old aid-de-camp and Inspector-General, was disposed, at the moment, to sympathize with the champion of South Carolina. Major Lewis, upon returning from the capitol after hearing the first day's portion of Mr. Webster's principal speech, found the General up, as usual, and waiting for intelligence.

"Been to the capitol, Major?" asked the President.

"Yes, General."

"Well, and how is Webster getting on?"

"He is delivering a most powerful speech," was the reply.

"I am afraid he's demolishing our friend Hayne."

"I expected it," said the General.

The President was not long in discovering that there was possible danger in the new doctrine. His own position with regard to it was peculiar, inasmuch as he had been elected to the presidency by the aid of the extreme southern or states-rights party. It is evident that the nullifiers at this stage of their operations, expected from the President some show of acquiescence and support. They were quickly undeceived.

It had been a custom in Washington, for twenty years, to celebrate the birth-day (April 13th) of Thomas Jefferson, the apostle of democracy. As General Jackson was regarded by his party as the great restorer and exemplifier of Jeffersonian principles, it was natural that they should desire to celebrate the festival, this year, with more than usual eclat. It was so resolved. A banquet was the mode selected; to

which the President, the Vice-President, the Cabinet, many leading members of Congress, and other distinguished persons were invited. Colonel Benton, who attended the banquet, narrates the part played in it by the President and Mr. Calhoun :

“There was a full assemblage when I arrived, and I observed gentlemen standing about in clusters in the ante-rooms, and talking with animation on something apparently serious, and which seemed to engross their thoughts. I soon discovered what it was—that it came from the promulgation of the twenty-four regular toasts, which savored of the new doctrine of nullification ; and which, acting on some previous misgivings, began to spread the feeling, that the dinner was got up to inaugurate that doctrine, and to make Mr. Jefferson its father. Many persons broke off, and refused to attend further ; but the company was still numerous, and ardent, as was proved by the number of volunteer toasts given—above eighty—in addition to the twenty-four regulars ; and the numerous and animated speeches delivered—the report of the whole proceedings filling eleven newspaper columns. When the regular toasts were over, the President was called upon for a volunteer, and gave it—the one which electrified the country, and has become historical :

“ ‘OUR FEDERAL UNION : IT MUST BE PRESERVED.’

“This brief and simple sentiment, receiving emphasis and interpretation from all the attendant circumstances, and from the feeling which had been spreading from the time of Mr. Webster’s speech, was received by the public as a proclamation from the President, to announce a plot against the Union, and to summon the people to its defense. Mr. Calhoun gave the next toast ; and it did not at all allay the suspicions which were crowding every bosom. It was this :

“ ‘The Union : Next to our Liberty the most dear : may we all remember that it can only be preserved by respecting the rights of the States, and distributing equally the benefit and burden of the Union.’

“This toast touched all the tender parts of the new question—liberty *before* union—*only* to be preserved—*State-rights*—inequality of *burdens* and *benefits*. These phrases, connecting themselves with Mr. Hayne’s speech, and with proceedings and publications in South Carolina, unveiled NULLIFICATION, as a new and distinct doctrine in the United States, with Mr. Calhoun for its apostle, and a new party in the field of which he was the leader. The proceedings of the day put an end to all doubt about the justice of Mr. Webster’s grand peroration, and revealed to the public mind the fact of an actual design tending to dissolve the Union.”\*

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\* Thirty Years’ View, i. 148.

It was supposed, at the time, that the toast offered by the President was an impromptu. On the contrary, the toast was prepared with singular deliberation, and was designed to produce the precise effect it did produce. Major Lewis favors the reader with the following interesting reminiscence : “ This celebrated toast ‘ The Federal Union—It must be preserved,’ was a cool, deliberate act. The *United States Telegraph*, General Duff Green’s paper, published a programme of the proceedings for the celebration the day before, to which the General’s attention had been drawn by a friend, with the suggestion that he had better read it. This he did in the course of the evening, and came to the conclusion that the celebration was to be a *nullification affair altogether*. With this impression on his mind he prepared early the next morning (the day of the celebration) three toasts which he brought with him when he came into his office, where he found Major Donelson and myself reading the morning papers. After taking his seat he handed them to me and asked me to read them, and tell him which I preferred—I ran my eye over them and then handed him the one I liked best. He handed them to Major Donelson also with the same request, who, on reading them, agreed with me. He said he preferred that one himself for the reason that it was shorter and more expressive. He then put that one into his pocket and threw the others into the fire. That is the true history of the toast the General gave on the Jefferson birth-day celebration in 1830, which fell among the nullifiers like an exploded bomb !

“ I believe I related to you, when at my house, the anecdote that occurred in the General’s office between him and a South Carolina member of Congress, who called to take leave of him. The General received him with great kindness, offering his hand, and begging him to be seated. After a few minutes of conversation, the member rose, and remarked to the General that he was about to return to South Carolina, and desired to know if he had any commands for his friends in that quarter. The General said, ‘ No, I believe not,’ but immediately recalling what he had said, remarked, ‘ Yes, I



have ; please give my compliments to my friends in your State, and say to them, that if a single drop of blood shall be shed there in opposition to the laws of the United States, I will hang the first man I can lay my hand on engaged in such treasonable conduct, upon the first tree I can reach.' ”

If the nullifying faction of the States Rights party were offended by the President's toast, the patriotic majority of that party were gratified, a month later, by his veto of the Maysville and Lexington road bill. No more internal improvements, said the President in his veto message, until two things are done, namely, the national debt paid, and the constitution revised so as to distinctly authorize appropriations for the construction of public works.

Though this celebrated veto message was not marked by the clearness of statement which characterized the President's first message to Congress, yet his real objections to the measure were sufficiently conspicuous. With the instinct of solvency strong within him, General Jackson had so set his heart upon the early extinction of the national debt, that any proposition involving an expenditure of the public money that could be safely avoided or deferred would have been unwelcome to him. In four years, he remarked, if no unusual diversion of the public funds be permitted, the debt will be extinguished ; and “ how gratifying the effect of presenting to the world the sublime spectacle of a republic, of more than twelve millions of happy people, in the fifty-fourth year of her existence—after having passed through two protracted wars, the one for the acquisition and the other for the maintenance of liberty—free from debt, and with all her immense resources unfettered ! ”

Congress, he added, was, on the one hand, diminishing the public revenue, by reducing the duties on tea, coffee, and cocoa, and, on the other, favoring appropriations for public works, which, in this very year, threatened to make the expenditures exceed the revenue by ten millions of dollars. He could not consent to such an untimely liberality, and the less as he had emphatically declared his sentiments upon the

subject in his annual message. Appropriations for internal improvements had always been the occasion of bitter contentions in Congress. The power of the federal government to appropriate money for such purposes was, at least, ill defined, and before any general system of using even the future surplus revenue for national works should be inaugurated, it would be best so to amend the constitution as to define its powers with the utmost exactness. The Cumberland road was an instructive admonition on this point. "Year after year contests are witnessed, growing out of efforts to obtain the necessary appropriations for completing and repairing this useful work. While one Congress may claim and exercise the power, a succeeding one may deny it ; and this fluctuation of opinion must be unavoidably fatal to any scheme, which, from its extent, would promote the interests and elevate the character of the country."

This veto, the first of a long series, excited a prodigious clamor among the opposition. The opposition, however, could not command a two-thirds vote in either house. So the bill was lost. It is questionable if, from the volume of presidential messages, an argument more unanswerable can be selected than this Maysville veto message. Would that the principles it unfolds had been permanently adopted ! It did vast good, however, in checking the torrent of unwise appropriation, and in throwing upon the people themselves the task of making the country more habitable and accessible.

I am sure it did not diminish the zest of General Jackson's opposition to the Kentucky turnpike to know, as he did well know, that Mr. Clay, in 1826, at the close of an after-dinner speech to some of his constituents, a speech severely denunciatory and sharply satirical of General Jackson, had given this toast : "The continuation of the turnpike road which passes through Lewisburg, and success to the cause of internal improvement, under every auspice." Nor was it unknown to General Jackson that the managers of the road, to testify their gratitude for past services, had erected,

at a conspicuous point in the road, a monument in honor of Henry Clay ; which, I believe, still stands.

Three other internal improvement bills were passed during the last days of the session. Two of these the President retained until after the adjournment of Congress, which was equivalent to vetoing them. The other he disposed of in the following brief message :—"To the Senate of the United States : Gentlemen, I have considered the bill proposing to authorize a subscription of stock in the ' Washington Turnpike Road Company,' and now return the same to the Senate in which it originated. I am unable to approve this bill ; and would respectfully refer the Senate to my Message to the House of Representatives on returning to that House the bill to authorize a subscription of stock in the Maysville, Washington, Paris, and Lexington Turnpike Road Company, for a statement of my objections to the bill herewith returned. The Message bears date on the 27th instant, and a printed copy of the same is herewith transmitted."

A quiet but effective defiance. The Senate voted again upon the bill, and came within five of carrying it by the requisite two-thirds. Colonel Benton and Edward Livingston voted for it. This was the last act of the session. Congress adjourned on the thirty-first of May.

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## CHAPTER XXIII.

MR. VAN BUREN CALLS ON MRS. EATON.

THESE may seem trivial words with which to head a chapter that treats of dynasties, successions to the presidency, and other high matters. Believing, however, that the political history of the United States, for the last thirty years, dates from the moment when the soft hand of Mr. Van Buren touched Mrs. Eaton's knocker, I think the heading appropriate.

General Jackson succeeded in showing that the charges against Mrs. Eaton were not supported by testimony, but he did not succeed in convincing the ladies who led the society of Washington that Mrs. Eaton was a proper person to be admitted into their circle. They would not receive her. Mrs. Calhoun would not, although she had called upon the lady soon after her marriage, in company with the Vice-President, her husband. Mrs. Berrien would not, although Mr. Berrien, ignorant, as he afterward said, of the lady's standing at the capital, had been one of the guests at her wedding. Mrs. Branch would not, although Mr. Branch had been taken into the Cabinet upon Major Eaton's suggestion. Mrs. Ingham would not, although the false gossip of the hour had not wholly spared her own fair fame. The wives of the foreign ministers would not. Mrs. Donelson, the mistress of the White House, though compelled to receive her, would not visit her. "Any thing else, uncle," said she, "I will do for you, but I can not call upon Mrs. Eaton." The General's reply, in effect, was this: "Then, go back to Tennessee, my dear." And she went to Tennessee. Her husband, who was also of the anti-Eaton party, threw up his post of private secretary, and went with her; and Mr. Nicholas P. Trist, of the State Department, was appointed private secretary in his stead. Six months after, however, by the interposition of friends, Major Donelson and his wife were induced to return and assume their former positions in the mansion of the President.

The two strongest things in the world were in collision—the will of Andrew Jackson and the will of lovely woman; of which latter the poet saith or singeth:

"If she will, she will, you may depend on 't,  
If she won't, she won't, and there's an end on 't."

Three weeks after the inauguration, when the President was in the midst of his correspondence with Dr. Ely, and when his feelings upon the subject of that correspondence

were keenest, Mr. Van Buren arrived in Washington to enter upon his duties as Secretary of State.

Mr. Van Buren was a widower. He had no daughters. Apprised of the state of things in Washington, he did what was proper, natural, and right. He called upon Mrs. Eaton—received Mrs. Eaton—made parties for Mrs. Eaton; and, on all occasions, treated Mrs. Eaton with the marked respect with which a gentleman always treats a lady whom he believes to have been the victim of unjust aspersion. A man does not get much credit for an act of virtue which is, also, of all the acts possible in his circumstances, the most politic. Many men have the weakness to refrain from doing right, because their doing so will be seen to signally promote their cherished objects. We have nothing to do with Mr. Van Buren's motives. I believe them to have been honest. I believe that he faithfully endeavored to perform the office of oil upon the troubled waters. The course he adopted was the right course, whatever may have been its motive.

The letter-writers of that day were in the habit of amusing their readers with the gossip of the capital, as letter-writers are now. But not a whisper of these scandals escaped into print until society had been rent by them into hostile "sets" for more than two years. After the explosion, one of the Washington correspondents gave an exaggerated and prejudiced, but not wholly incorrect account of certain scenes in which "Bellona" (the nickname of Mrs. Eaton) and the Secretary of State had figured. It was among the diplomatic corps, with whom Mr. Van Buren had an official as well as personal intimacy, that he strove to make converts to the Eatonian cause. It chanced that Mr. Vaughan, the British minister, and Baron Krudener, the Russian minister, were both bachelors, and both entered good-naturedly into the plans of the Secretary of State.

"A ball and supper," says the writer just referred to, "were got up by his excellency, the British minister, Mr. Vaughan, a particular friend of Mr. Van Buren. After various stratagems to keep Bellona afloat during the evening, in which

almost every cotillon in which she made her appearance was instantly dissolved into its original elements, she was at length conducted by the British minister to the head of his table, where, in pursuance of that instinctive power of inattention to whatever it seems improper to notice, the ladies seemed not to know that she was at the table. This ball and supper were followed by another given by the Russian minister (another old bachelor). To guard against the repetition of the mortification in the spontaneous dissolution of the cotillons, and the neglect of the ladies at supper (where, you must observe, none but ladies sat down), Mr. Van Buren made a direct and earnest appeal to the lady of the minister of Holland, Mrs. Huygens, whom he entreated in her own language to consent to be introduced to the ‘accomplished and lovely Mrs. Eaton.’

“The ball scene arrived, and Mrs. Huygens, with uncommon dignity, maintained her ground, avoiding the advances of Bellona and her associates, until supper was announced, when Mrs. Huygens was informed by Baron Krudener that Mr. Eaton would conduct her to the table. She declined and remonstrated, but in the meantime Mr. Eaton advanced to offer his arm. She at first objected, but to relieve him from his embarrassment, walked with him to the table, where she found Mrs. Eaton seated at the head, beside an empty chair for herself. Mrs. Huygens had no alternative but to become an instrument of the intrigue, or decline taking supper ; she chose the latter, and taking hold of her husband’s arm, withdrew from the room. This was the offense for which General Jackson afterward threatened to send her husband home.

“The next scene in the drama was a grand dinner, given in the cast room of the palace, where it was arranged that Mr. Vaughan was to conduct Mrs. Eaton to the table, and place her at the side of the President, who took care, by his marked attentions, to admonish all present (about eighty, including the principal officers of the government and their ladies) that Mrs. Eaton was one of his favorites, and that

he expected her to be treated as such in all places. Dinner being over, the company retired to the coffee-room, to indulge in the exhilarating conversation which wine and good company usually excite. But all would not do—nothing could move the inflexible ladies.”

How exquisitely gratifying to General Jackson Mr. Van Buren’s emphatic public recognition of Mrs. Eaton must have been, every reader will perceive. General Jackson had thrown his whole soul into her cause, as has been abundantly shown in previous pages of this volume. But it was not General Jackson alone whom Mr. Van Buren’s conduct penetrated with delight and gratitude. It completely won the four persons who enjoyed more of General Jackson’s confidence and esteem than any others in Washington. First, Major Eaton, the President’s old friend and most confidential cabinet-adviser. Secondly, Mrs. Eaton. Thirdly, Mrs. O’Neal, the mother of Mrs. Eaton, the friend of the President and of his lamented wife. Lastly, but not least in importance, Major William B. Lewis, an inmate of the White House, the President’s most intimate and most constant companion, and formerly the brother-in-law of Major Eaton. The preference and friendship of these four persons included the preference and support of Amos Kendall, Isaac Hill, Dr. Randolph, and all the peculiar adherents of General Jackson.

Mr. Van Buren was, moreover, just the man to “get along with” General Jackson. No one could ever quarrel with a gentleman who never gave and never took offense. Even with Mr. Clay he remained always on terms of jocularitv. Mr. Clay writes in 1834: “Mr. Van Buren yesterday offered to bet me a suit of clothes upon each of the elections in the city of New York and in your State. . . . I told him yesterday, that if the people entertained the administration in its late measures, I should begin to fear that our experiment of free government had failed; that he would probably be elected the successor of Jackson; that he would introduce a system of intrigue and corruption that would enable him to designate his successor; and that, after a few years of

lingering and fretful existence, we should end in dissolution of the Union, or in despotism. *He laughed, and remarked that I entertained morbid feelings.* I replied with good nature, that what I had said, I deliberately and sincerely believed."

And Jesse Hoyt, in recommending a valet to the Secretary of State, mentioned that the man's only fault was bad temper, which, he added, was of no consequence in the servant of a man who could never provoke it. It has, also, been frequently remarked, that a constitutionally irascible man finds his delightful counterpart in one who is constitutionally cool and good tempered. Accordingly, we find Mr. Van Buren writing home to his friend Hoyt, when he had been only a month in Washington: "The story you tell about the President's great confidence in Mr. Berrien, and little in me, is the veriest stuff that could be conceived. The repetition of such idle gossip constrains me to say, what I am almost ashamed to do, that I have found the President affectionate, confidential, and kind to the last degree; and that I am entirely satisfied that there is no degree of good feeling or confidence which he does not entertain for me. He has, however, his own wishes and favorite views upon points which it is not my province to attempt to control. Upon every matter he wishes to have the truth and respects it; and will in the end satisfy all of the purity of his views and intentions."

The public events of the summer of 1829, and those of the succeeding session of Congress, being known to the reader, I now invite attention to certain occurrences that took place this year in the private apartments of the President's house, of the highest importance, though never before made known.

The year 1829 had not closed before General Jackson was resolved to do all that in him lay to secure the election of Mr. Van Buren as his successor to the presidency. Nor did that year come to an end before he began to act in furtherance of the project. Before me is a letter from Andrew Jackson to his old friend Judge Overton of Tennessee, dated December 31st, 1829, which contains proof of this assertion.



To this letter is appended a Note by Major Lewis, explanatory of its secret purpose. For the convenience of the reader, the Note shall be submitted to his perusal first.

NOTE BY MAJOR LEWIS UPON A LETTER OF PRESIDENT JACKSON.

"The following letter was written under circumstances and for the purposes stated in the following remarks. All through the summer and fall of 1829, General Jackson was in very feeble health, and in December of the same year his friends became seriously alarmed for his safety. Indeed, his physical system seemed to be totally changed. His feet and legs particularly had been much swollen for several months, and continued to get worse every day, until his extreme debility appeared to be rapidly assuming the character of a confirmed dropsy. The General himself was fully aware of his critical and alarming situation, and frequently conversed with me upon the subject. The conversations occasionally led to another subject, in which I took a deep interest, to wit, the election of Mr. Van Buren as his successor. This I thought highly important, for the purpose of carrying out the principles upon which the General intended to administer the government. But if he were to die so soon after his advent to power, I greatly feared this object would be defeated. However, even in that event, I did not entirely despair of success. It occurred to me that General Jackson's name, though he might be dead, would prove a powerful lever, if judiciously used, in raising Mr. Van Buren to the presidency. I therefore determined to get the General, if possible, to write a letter to some friend, to be used at the next succeeding presidential election (in case of his death), expressive of the confidence he reposed in Mr. Van Buren's abilities, patriotism, and qualifications for any station, even the highest within the gift of the people. Having come to this resolution, I embraced the first favorable opportunity of broaching the subject to him, and was happy to find that he was not disposed to interpose the slightest objection to the proposition. He accordingly wrote a letter to his old friend, Judge Overton, of which the preceding is a duplicate, and handed it to me to copy, with authority to make such alterations as I might think proper. After copying it (having made only a few verbal alterations), I requested him to read it, and if satisfied with it, to sign it. He read it, and said it would do, and then put his name to it, remarking, as he returned it to me :

" ' If I die, you have my permission to make such use of it as you may think most desirable. '

"I will barely add, that the General wrote this letter to his old and confidential friend, Judge Overton, at my particular request, and with a full knowledge of the object for which I wished it written. He has, for-

tunately for the country, however, recovered his health, and there will now, I hope, be no necessity for using it. In conclusion, I will further remark, that both the signature and indorsement, as will be perceived, are in General Jackson's own proper hand-writing."

(THE LETTER.)

GENERAL JACKSON TO JUDGE OVERTON.

"WASHINGTON, Dec. 31st, 1830.

"MY DEAR SIR: I have been anxiously awaiting the acknowledgment of my message to Congress forwarded to you, with such remarks as its subject-matter might suggest. But, as yet, I have not heard from you. As far as I have seen it commented on in the public journals, it has been well received, except in the Abbeville district, South Carolina, where it has been severely attacked. It is an old adage that 'straws show which way the wind blows.' I assure you this has somewhat astonished, though I can not say it has surprised me, because I had hints that some of my old friends had changed, and the case of Major Eaton was thought to present a fair opportunity of destroying him and injuring me, by circulating secretly foul and insidious slanders against him and his family. Be it so; I shall pursue the even tenor of my way, consulting only the public good—not the popularity of any individual.

"Congress is progressing with its labors, and I think I see in the commencement a little new leaven trying to mix itself with the old lump; but I believe the old will be hard to mix with the new. I regret also to say there is some little feeling still existing in a part of my cabinet. I am in hopes, however, that harmony will be restored, and that union of feeling and action which so happily prevailed when this administration was first organized, will be again revived. I do not think I have been well treated by those members who have been instrumental in introducing discord into my cabinet. They knew as well before as they did after their appointments who were to compose my cabinet. If they had any objection to associating upon terms of equality with any of the other members, they should have had candor enough to say so, before they accepted the offer of a seat in the cabinet. I still hope, however, that I shall not be driven to extremities; but should action become necessary on my part, you may rest assured I shall not hesitate when the public interest requires it.

"It gives me pleasure to inform you that the most cordial good feeling exists between Mr. Van Buren, Major Barry, and Major Eaton. These gentlemen I have always found true, harmonious, and faithful. They not only most cheerfully coöperate with me in promoting the public weal, but do every thing in their power to render my situation personally as pleas-

ant and comfortable as the nature of my public duties will admit. Permit me here to say of Mr. Van Buren that I have found him every thing that I could desire him to be, and believe him not only deserving my confidence, but the confidence of the nation. Instead of his being selfish and intriguing, as has been represented by some of his opponents, I have ever found him frank, open, candid, and manly. As a councilor, he is able and prudent—republican in his principles, and one of the most pleasant men to do business with I ever saw. He, my dear friend, is well qualified to fill the highest office in the gift of the people, who in him will find a true friend and safe depository of their rights and liberty.

“ I wish I could say as much for Mr. Calhoun and some of his friends. You know the confidence I once had in that gentleman. I, however, of him desire not to speak ; but I have a right to believe that most of the troubles, vexations, and difficulties I have had to encounter, since my arrival in this city, have been occasioned by his friends. But for the present let this suffice. I find Mr. Calhoun objects to the apportionment of the surplus revenues among the several States, after the public debt is paid. He is, also, silent on the bank question, and is believed to have encouraged the introduction and adoption of the resolutions in the South Carolina Legislature relative to the tariff. I wish you to have a few numbers written on the subject of the apportionment of the surplus revenue, after the national debt is paid. It is the only thing that can allay the jealousies arising between the different sections of the Union, and prevent that flagitious *log-rolling-legislation*, which must, in the end, destroy every thing like harmony, if not the Union itself. The moment the people see that the surplus revenue is to be divided among the States (when there shall be a surplus), and applied to internal improvement and education, they instruct their members to husband the revenue for the payment of the national debt, so that the surplus, afterward, may be distributed in an *equal ratio* among the several States. If this meets your view, by giving it an impulse before the people, in a few written numbers, you will confer on your country a blessing that will be hailed as no ordinary boon by posterity, who must feel its benefits. I feel the more anxious about this, because I have reason to believe a decided stand will be taken by the friends of Mr. Calhoun, in Congress, against the policy, if not the constitutionality, of such a measure. Let me hear from you on the receipt of this. Present me affectionately to your amiable family, and believe me to be,

“ Your friend,      ANDREW JACKSON.”

Judge Overton, I believe, never knew the purpose for which this letter was written. The copy retained was signed by General Jackson and placed among the secret papers of

Major Lewis, where it reposed until copied for the readers of these pages in 1858.

General Jackson and Major Lewis knew how to keep a secret ; and this secret was confided, at first, to no one. Yet I find, from the correspondence of Mr. Webster and others, that some inkling of the truth with regard to General Jackson's preference of Mr. Van Buren for the succession, escaped the inner offices of the White House almost immediately. Sixteen days after the letter to Judge Overton had been written, Mr. Webster wrote to his friend, Dutton : " Mr. Van Buren has evidently, at this moment, quite the lead in influence and importance. He controls all the pages on the back stairs, and flatters what seems to be at present the Aaron's serpent among the President's desires, a settled purpose of making out the lady, of whom so much has been said, a person of reputation. It is odd enough, but too evident to be doubted, that the consequence of this dispute in the social and fashionable world, is producing great political effects, and *may very probably determine who shall be successor to the present chief magistrate.* Such great events," etc., etc., etc.

A month later (February 27th, 1830) Mr. Webster wrote to Jeremiah Mason : " Calhoun is forming a party against Van Buren, and as the President is supposed to be Van Buren's man, the Vice-President has great difficulty to separate his opposition to Van Buren from opposition to the President. Our idea is to let them pretty much alone ; by no means to act a secondary part to either. We never can and never must support either. While they are thus arranging themselves for battle, that is, Calhoun and Van Buren, there are two considerations which are likely to be overlooked or disregarded by them, and which are material to be considered. 1. The probability that General Jackson will run again ; that that is his present purpose I am quite sure. 2. The extraordinary power of this anti-Masonic party, especially in Pennsylvania."

Mr. Webster was correct in his opinion that General Jackson was likely to " run again," but he was exceedingly

mistaken in supposing that the fact was "overlooked" by Mr. Van Buren. Mr. Van Buren was far too acute a politician not to be aware that there was only one man in the country, and he Andrew Jackson, who, in 1832, could defeat the combined opposition of Calhoun and the South, Clay and the West, Webster and the North. Mr. Van Buren, from the first, insisted upon General Jackson's running a second time. It was an essential part of the programme. It was that which alone could make the rest of the programme possible.

Then there *was* a programme? Most assuredly. The "Jackson party" came into power against the "Secretary dynasty;" but that party had not been in power a year before it had arranged a programme of succession so long, that it would have required twenty-four years to play it out. It was divided into three parts of eight years each: Andrew Jackson, eight years; Martin Van Buren, eight years; Thomas H. Benton, eight years. It will be safe for any one to deny this, because such programmes are never put into writing, and can seldom be proved. But I am assured it is a fact. The intelligent reader will find evidence of it in the political history of the time.

Among the invaluable papers of Major Lewis we must look to discover the mode by which General Jackson was brought before the people for reëlection. The first steps were taken when the President had served just one year. Read attentively the following letter, which was written in the presidential mansion:

MAJOR LEWIS TO COL. L. C. STANBAUGH OF PENNSYLVANIA.

"WASHINGTON, March 11th, 1830.

"DEAR SIR: Yours of the 15th has been received, and, as stated, the nomination of Major Lee has been rejected by the Senate. Though very much to be regretted, yet it is no evidence of the President's want of popularity in that body. Major Lee's own connections were the cause of his rejection.

"You have, no doubt, heard of the unfortunate affair relative to his domestic relations; which, however, on account of deep and sincere repentance, all the good and liberal minded were disposed to forgive.

Not so with his connections. They pressed the subject upon the Senate in such a manner as to compel Lee's own friends to vote against him. It does not in any manner affect the administration, as the responsibility of the nomination must rest upon those who recommended him; but it must deeply wound *his* feelings, and prove, I fear, greatly injurious to his future prospects in life.

“With regard to General Jackson's serving another term, it would be improper for me, perhaps, situated as I am, to say any thing; but, my dear sir, almost every friend he has, I mean *real friends*, thinks with you, that there is no other way by which the great Republican party, who brought him into power, can be preserved. Clay's friends are beginning to hold up their heads again; their countenances are brightening, not on account of Chilton's letter, for he is of too little consequence, but because of the anticipated splits between the friends of those who aspire to succeed the present chief magistrate. It is certainly necessary, as you suggest, that some steps should be taken to quiet the public mind; but perhaps I may differ with you as to *what* should be done, and *how* it should be done. I do not think it would be proper for General Jackson to avow at this time, his determination to serve another term; nor do I think it would be prudent for his friends *here*, to take the lead in placing his name before the nation for reëlection. According to the General's *own* principles (always practiced on by him), he can not decline serving again if called on by the people.

“I am not authorized to say that he would permit his name to be used again, but knowing him as I do, I feel *confident* that if he believed the interest of the country required it, and that it was the wish of the people he should serve another term, he would not hesitate one moment. If, then, it is the desire of your State that he should serve another term *let the members of her legislature express the sentiments of the people upon that subject*. But let it be done in such a way as not to make it necessary for him to *speak* in relation to the matter. Such an expression of public sentiment, would come with better grace from Pennsylvania than from any other quarter, and would have a more powerful effect—because of her well-known democratic principles, and because she has always been the General's strongest friend. *If any thing be done in the business the sooner the better.*

“You will have seen in the papers that Commodore Porter has been nominated to succeed Major Lee. Every one here rejoices at it.

“Yours sincerely,

W. B. LEWIS.”

In this letter was inclosed another—for Major Lewis never did these things by halves—the nature and object of which he himself explains in one of his precious Notes.

## ANOTHER NOTE BY MAJOR LEWIS.

"The inclosed letter was prepared and sent by me to Harrisburg, for the members of the legislature to sign and forward to the President of the United States, provided a majority of them concurred in the views therein taken. Col. Stanbaugh, to whom it was inclosed, consulted with them upon the subject, and after making a few verbal alterations, a majority of the members signed and transmitted it to the President. This was the first movement made toward bringing out General Jackson for a second term. It was afterward followed up by the legislatures of New York and Ohio, principally upon my suggestions and advice to the friends of the administration in those two States. Indeed, I wrote several letters to my friends in Ohio also (of which I kept no copies), and procured others to be written, urging the absolute necessity of such a step at the next meeting of their legislature, as the most effectual, if not the only means of defeating the machinations of Mr. Calhoun and his friends, who were resolved on forcing General Jackson from the presidential chair after one term. The peculiar situation of the Vice-President, it was believed, made this necessary. He was then serving out his second term, and as none of his predecessors had ever served more than eight years, his friends thought it might be objected to, and perhaps would be injurious to him, to be presented to the nation for a third term. Under this view of the subject, they did not seem disposed to hazard the experiment. But what was to be done? It would not do for him to retire to the shades of private life for four long years. He could not run for a third term, and they dare not run him in opposition to General Jackson. Seeing no other way by which these perplexing difficulties could be surmounted, and believing there would be danger in further postponing his pretensions, his friends boldly resolved to get rid of the General, upon the ground that it was understood, during the canvass, that he was to serve four years only in case of his election. It was to defeat this project of the Vice-President and his friends that I opened a correspondence with Col. Stanbaugh, and suggested to him the necessity of bringing out General Jackson again, and the manner of doing it. The scheme succeeded admirably, and in a few months the hopes of Mr. Calhoun and his partisans were completely withered, and the idea of driving General Jackson from the field abandoned altogether."

## THE INCLOSED LETTER.

"HARRISBURG, March 20, 1830.

*To His Excellency Andrew Jackson, President of the United States.*

"DEAR SIR: The undersigned, members of the legislature of Pennsylvania, before closing the duties assigned them by their constituents, beg

leave to tender to you their best wishes for your health and happiness, and to express to you the confidence reposed by them in the sound republican principles which mark the course of your administration. The second political revolution effected in the year 1829 is progressing in a way to attain those great results which were fondly anticipated, and which, in the end, we ardently hope will tend to cement in stronger bonds the republican feelings of the country. In a free government like ours, parties must and will exist; it should be so, inasmuch as it serves to make those who are dominant vigilant and active in the discharge of the important duties which give life, health, and activity to the great principles by which, as a free people, we should be governed. If the voice of Pennsylvania, which has recently been prominently and effectively exerted in the election of our present distinguished chief magistrate, can have influence, it will, as heretofore, be exerted in inducing you to permit your name and distinguished services again to be presented to the American people. We deem it of importance to the maintenance of correct republican principles that the country should not thus early be again drawn into a warm and virulent contest as to who shall be your successor.

“If the people can indulge a hope that, in acceding to their wishes as heretofore, the warmth of former contests may be spared, they will be able to repose in peace and quiet, and before the end of your second term, will expect with confidence that the great principle of governmental reform will be so harmonized and arranged that the affairs of the nation for the future will move on certainly, peacefully, and happily. Expressing what we feel and believe to be the language of our constituents, we claim to indulge the expectation that your avowed principle ‘neither to seek nor to decline to serve your country in public office,’ will still be adhered to, that thereby the people may obtain repose, and toward the termination of your second term be better prepared to look around and ascertain into whose hands can be best confided the care and guardianship of our dearest rights, our happiness, and independence.

“This communication is not made with the intention of obtaining from you any declaration at this time upon this subject. We are aware that persons would be found to call such a declaration premature, before some general expression of satisfaction in relation to the course you have pursued had been exhibited, and time afforded for it to be evinced. Pennsylvania, heretofore first to express her attachment upon this subject, seeks only to maintain the position she has assumed, and to express through her representatives her continued confidence in your stern political integrity, and the wise, judicious, republican measures of your administration, and to cherish the hope that the country may again be afforded the opportunity of having those services, the benefit of which she is now so happily enjoying. On this subject, sir, we speak not only our own sentiments and opin-



ions, but feel that the people will accord to the suggestion, and every where respond to what we have declared.

"Wishing you long life, health, and happiness, we remain your friends and fellow citizens."

To this address sixty-eight names were finally appended. Colonel Stanbaugh, in a letter to Major Lewis, narrates how those names were obtained :

"I can not tell you," he wrote, March 31, "how much I feel rejoiced that *you* see the *necessity* of placing General Jackson's name before the American people without delay as a candidate for reëlection. Two modes presented themselves to me as well calculated to afford our friends at Washington a pretext for announcing the General's name as a candidate. One was a letter, to be addressed to him, approving the measures of his administration, etc., by the General Committee of Correspondence of this State, of which I am a member; and the other way that suggested itself was a call from the different presses in the State which supported him at the last election. I had prepared letters to carry both these plans into execution, and although some of our presses, you are aware, are under the control of a *certain influence*, I believe I could get them all to come out on the subject. No matter what the private views and feelings of politicians may be who claim to belong to the democratic party, they will hesitate before they give their *own opinions and wishes*, when the question is put to them, either to support or reject the old hero.

"Pennsylvania is still sound, depend upon it, no matter what time-serving politicians, *high in power*, may say to the contrary; but just as certain it is, that the salvation of the democratic party, as well here as in other States, depends upon General Jackson's being again a candidate.

"Your letter convinced me at once that this subject can no where 'originate with better grace than in the Pennsylvania Legislature,' and there it shall originate if God spares my life till to-morrow. The views you sent me could not, in my opinion, be altered for the better, and I drew up a letter from them, with but a trifling variation, or rather addition. There were fifteen members at my house yesterday afternoon, every one of whom signed the letter, and at once came into the spirit of the subject. Two more—Senators—were here this morning and signed it. On Tuesday I hope we will be enabled to send it to the Patriot Chief. Would it not, my dear sir, be good policy for other States friendly to General Jackson to follow Pennsylvania immediately with similar declarations? It might all be done before Congress adjourns. Write to me, if you please, by return mail, and give me your opinion as to the place the letter had better make its first appearance. I think the *Pennsylvania Reporter* would be the

proper place. It would have the appearance of being the act of the members, and state that they were in good earnest on the subject. The sooner it is published, I think, the better. If you write by return mail I will get your letter on Wednesday, and I can have the other published in Friday's paper. Remember me to the President, to Major Eaton, and Mrs. Eaton."

Major Lewis promptly replied. The address was published in the paper named by Colonel Stanbaugh, preceded by these words: "We are pleased to lay before our readers the following letter, signed by sixty-eight members of the Legislature, expressing their approbation of the wise, judicious, republican measures of General Jackson's administration, and respectfully urging him again to become a candidate for the presidency."

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## CHAPTER XXIV.

### AN UNHARMONIOUS CABINET.

COULD the Cabinet be other than an unharmonious one? It was divided into two parties upon the all-absorbing question of Mrs. Eaton's character. For Mrs. Eaton were Mr. Van Buren, Major Eaton, Mr. Barry, and the President. Against Mrs. Eaton were Mr. Ingham, Mr. Branch, Mr. Berrien, and the Vice-President. The situation of poor Eaton was most embarrassing and painful; for the opposition to his wife being feminine, it could neither be resisted nor avenged. He was the most miserable of men, and the more the fiery President strove to right the wrongs under which he groaned, the worse his position became. The show of civility kept up between himself and the three married men in the Cabinet was, at last, only maintained on occasions that were strictly official. Months passed during which he did not exchange a word with Mr. Branch except in the presence of the President.

To add to his disgust, charges were trumped up against himself of having, in settling the accounts of the late purser, Timberlake, connived at a fraud upon the government. An anonymous letter was sent him of a truly fiendish character. "Revenge is sweet," said this nameless devil, "and I have you in my power, and I will roast you, and boil you, and bake you ; and I hope you may long live to prolong my pleasure. Lay not the flattering unction to your soul, that you can escape me. I would not that death, or any evil thing, should take you from my grasp for half the world." Never was a Cabinet minister so tormented before his time.

After enduring this unhappy state of things for nearly a year, the President's patience was completely exhausted, and he was determined that his Cabinet should either be harmonized or dissolved. Mr. Ingham afterward placed on record the manner in which the difficulty was, for a time, disposed of. His statement, which accords with the narratives of Mr. Branch and Mr. Berrien, is correct in its material particulars.

"On Wednesday, the 27th of January, 1830," wrote Mr. Ingham, "Colonel R. M. Johnson, of Kentucky, waited on me in the Treasury Department, and after some preliminary conversation, in which he expressed his regret that my family and that of Mr. Branch and Mr. Berrien did not visit Mrs. Eaton, he said that it had been a subject of great excitement with the President, who had come to the determination of having harmony in his Cabinet by some accommodation of this matter. He, Colonel Johnson, was the friend of us all, and had now come at the request of the President to see whether any thing could be done : who thought that, when our ladies gave parties, they ought to invite Mrs. Eaton ; and as they had never returned her call, if they would leave the first card and open a formal intercourse in that way, the President would be satisfied ; but unless something was done of this nature, he had no doubt, indeed he knew that the President was resolved to have harmony, and would probably remove Mr. Branch, Mr. Berrien, and myself. I replied to Colonel Johnson, that in all matters of official business, or having any connection therewith, I considered myself bound to maintain an open, frank, and harmonious intercourse with the gentlemen I was associated with. That the President had a right to expect the exertion of my best faculties, and the employment of my time, in the public service. As to the family of Mr. Eaton, I felt an obligation on me not to say any thing to aggravate the difficulties

which he labored under, but to observe a total silence and neutrality in relation to the reports about his wife, and to inculcate the same course as to my family, and if any other representations had been made to the President, they were false. Having prescribed to myself this rule, and always acted upon it, I had done all that the President had a right to expect. That the society of Washington was liberally organized; there was but one circle, into which every person of respectable character, disposed to be social, was readily admitted, without reference to the circumstance of birth, fortune, or station, which operated in many other places. That we had no right to exert official power to regulate its social intercourse. That Mrs. Eaton had never been received by the society here, and it did not become us to force her upon it; that my family had, therefore, not associated with her, and had done so with my approbation; and that the President ought not, for the sake of his own character, to interfere in such matters. But if he chose to exert his power to force my family to visit any body they did not choose to visit, he was interfering with what belonged to me, and no human power should regulate the social intercourse of my family, by means of official or any other power which I could resist. If I could submit to such control, I should be unworthy of my station, and would despise myself. That it was eminently due to the character of the President to have it known that he did not interfere in such matters; and that the course we had pursued was preservative of his honor and political standing. I had taken my ground on mature reflection as to what was due to my family, my friends, and the administration, without any prejudice to Major Eaton or his wife, and had fully determined not to change it, whatever might be the consequence.

“Col. Johnson said that he had been requested by the President to have a conversation with the Secretary of the Navy and the Attorney-General also; but, from what I had said, he supposed it would be of no avail. The President expressed a hope that our families would have been willing to invite Mrs. Eaton to their large parties, to give the appearance of an ostensible intercourse, adding that he was so much excited that he was like a roaring lion. He had heard that the lady of a foreign minister had joined in the conspiracy against Mrs. Eaton, and he had sworn that he would send her and her husband home if he could not put an end to such doings. I replied, that it could hardly be possible that the President contemplated such a step. Col. Johnson replied that he certainly did; and again remarked that it seemed to be useless for him to see Mr. Branch and Mr. Berrien. I told him that each of us had taken our course upon our own views of the propriety without concert; and that he ought not to consider me as answering for any but myself. He then proposed that I should meet him at Mr. Branch's, and invite Mr. Berrien, that evening at seven o'clock, which was agreed to. Col. Johnson came to my house

about six, and we went up to Mr. Berrien's, having first sent for Mr. Branch. On our way to Mr. Berrien's, Col. Johnson remarked that the President had informed him that he would invite Mr. Branch, Mr. Berrien, and myself, to meet him on the next Friday, when he would inform us, in the presence of Dr. Ely, of his determination; and if we did not agree to comply with his wishes, he would expect us to send in our resignations.

"Upon our arrival at Mr. Berrien's, Col. Johnson renewed the subject in presence of him and Governor Branch, and repeated substantially, though I thought rather more qualifiedly, what he had said to me. He did not go so much into detail, nor do I recollect whether he mentioned the President's remarks as to the lady above mentioned and Dr. Ely; those gentlemen will better recollect. Mr. Branch and Mr. Berrien replied, as unequivocally as I had done, that they would never consent to have the social relations of their families controlled by any power whatever but their own. Mr. Branch, Mr. Berrien, and myself went the same evening to a party at Col. Towson's, where a report was current that we were to be removed forthwith, of which I had no doubt at the time.

"The next morning, Col. J. came to my house and said that he ought, perhaps, to have been more frank last evening, and told us positively that the President had finally determined on our removal from office, unless we agreed at once that our families should visit Mrs. Eaton, and invite her to their large parties; and that he had made up his mind to designate Mr. Dickins to take charge of the Treasury Department, and Mr. Kendall to take charge of the Navy Department, and would find an Attorney-General somewhere. I observed that my course was fixed, and could not be changed for all the offices in the President's gift; and it made no more difference to me than to any other person whom the President designated to take my place. In the evening of the same day, Col. J. called again, and informed me that he had just been with the President, who had drawn up a paper explanatory of what he had intended and expected of us; that some of his Tennessee friends had been with him for several hours; that his passions had subsided, and he had entirely changed his ground. He would not insist on our families visiting Mrs. Eaton; he only wished us to assist in putting down the slanders against her; that he believed her innocent, and he thought our families ought to do what they could to sustain her, if they could not visit her; and that he wished to see me the next day. Col. Johnson added that the President had been exceedingly excited for several days, but was now perfectly calm and mild. The next day I waited on the President, and opened the subject by stating that Col. Johnson had informed me that he wished to see me, to which he assented, and went into a long argument to show how innocent a woman Mrs. Eaton was, and how much she had been persecuted, and

mentioned the names of a number of ladies who had been active in this persecution, and that the lady of a foreign minister was also one of the conspirators; adding that he would send her and her husband home, and teach him and his master that a wife of a member of his cabinet was not to be thus treated; that Mrs. Eaton was as pure and chaste as Mrs. Donelson's infant daughter, but there was a combination here among a number of ladies, not those of the heads of departments, to drive her out of society, and to drive her husband out of office; but he would be cut into inch pieces on the rack before he would suffer him or his wife to be injured by their vile calumnies; that he was resolved to have harmony in his cabinet, and he wished us to join in putting down the slanders against Mrs. Eaton. I observed to the President that I had never considered it incumbent on me to investigate the character of Mrs. Eaton; such a service did not, in my judgment, come within the scope of my duties to the government; it belonged to society alone to determine such matters. The power of the administration could not change the opinion of the community, even if it could be properly used to control the relations of domestic life in any case. The society of Washington must be the best judges of whom it ought to receive. I regretted the difficulties which Major Eaton labored under, and had felt it to be my duty not to aggravate them. I had intended at an early day to have had a conversation with him on the subject, with a view to have our social relations defined; but no opportunity had offered without volunteering one, and it had not been done in that way. The course I had taken was, however, adopted with great care, to save his feelings as much as possible, consistent with what was due to my family, and the community with which we were associated. I consider the charge of my family to be a sacred trust, belonging exclusively to myself as a member of society. The administration had nothing to do with it, more than with that of any other individual, and political power could not be properly exerted over their social intercourse, and it was important to his reputation to have it understood that he did not interfere in such matters. That I was not aware of any want of harmony in the cabinet; I had not seen the slightest symptom of such a feeling in its deliberations, and I was perfectly certain that my official conduct had never been influenced in the slightest degree by a feeling of that nature. I saw no ground, therefore, for the least change on my part in this respect.

"To which the President replied in a changed tone, that he had the most entire confidence in my integrity and capacity in executing the duties of the department, and expressed his perfect satisfaction, in that respect, with my whole conduct; he had never supposed for a moment that my official acts had been influenced in the least degree by any unkind feeling toward Major Eaton; and he did not mean to insist on our families visiting Mrs. Eaton. He had been much excited for some time past

by the combination against her, and he wished us to aid him in putting down their slanders, adding that she was excluded from most of the invitations to parties; and when invited, she was insulted; that the lady of a foreign minister, before referred to, had insulted her at Baron Krudener's party.

"I remarked, that some injustice might be done to that lady on that occasion; although she might not choose to associate with Mrs. Eaton, I did not think she intended to insult her; she might have supposed that there was some design, not altogether respectful to herself in the offer of the attendance to supper of the Secretary of War, whose wife she did not visit; instead of that of the Secretary of State, which, according to the usual practice, she probably considered herself entitled to. I was present, and saw most of what had happened. She evidently thought herself aggrieved at something, but acted with much dignity on the occasion. I saw no appearance of insult offered to Mrs. Eaton. He replied that he had been fully informed, and knew all about it; and but for certain reasons which he mentioned, he would have sent the foreign minister before referred to and his wife home immediately.

"After some further conversation on this and other matters, in which I consider the President as having entirely waived the demand made through Col. Johnson, that my family must visit Mrs. Eaton, as the condition of my remaining in office, and in which he expressed himself in terms of personal kindness toward me, I took my leave. He did not show me, or read any paper on the subject."

Col. Johnson explained, on reading this statement, that, in his extreme desire to restore peace, he had gone further in his communications with the Secretaries, than the President authorized him to go. The suggestion with regard to their inviting Mrs. Eaton to their "large parties," he said, was his own, not the President's. "The complaint made by General Jackson against Messrs. Ingham, Branch and Berrien was that they were using their influence to have Major Eaton and his family excluded from all respectable circles, for the purpose of degrading him, and thus drive him from office; and that the attempt had been made even upon the foreign ministers, and in one case had produced the desired effect. He proposed no mode of accommodation or satisfaction, but declared expressly that if such was the fact, he would dismiss them from office. He then read to me a paper containing the principles upon which he intended to act, which disclaimed

the right to interfere with the social relations of his cabinet. . . . When the President mentioned this charge of conspiracy, I vindicated you against it. I gave it as my opinion that he was misinformed. To prevent a rupture, I requested the President to postpone calling upon those members of his cabinet till Saturday, that I might have the opportunity of two days to converse with them. When I made my report to the President, I informed him that I was confirmed in my opinion previously expressed, that he had been misinformed as to the combination and conspiracy. I informed him of your unequivocal and positive denial of the fact, and communicated every thing which transpired between us calculated to satisfy his mind on the subject. It was this report of mine that gave him satisfaction, and changed his feelings and determination—not his ground as you have supposed ; with me he had no ground to change. He had assumed none except that which I have stated ; nor did I ever make use of such an expression to you that he had changed his ground. It is true that I informed you that the President was very much excited, but I do not now recollect the precise language used to convey my idea of that excitement. I presume you had the advantage of your private memoranda, when you say I compared him to a roaring lion.”

A day or two after, the President offered his personal mediation for the purpose of restoring harmony between Major Eaton and Mr. Branch. Mr. Branch accepted the President's offer. “I have received,” he wrote to the President, January 29th, “your note of yesterday's date, and do most cheerfully accept your friendly mediation ; more, however, from a desire to give you an additional evidence of the friendly feelings which have actuated my bosom toward yourself, than from a consciousness of having given to Major Eaton just cause for the withdrawal of his friendship. As a further manifestation of the frankness which I trust will ever characterize my conduct, I agree to meet him this day at two o'clock, in the presence of Major Barry, at Mr. Van Buren's, and in his presence also.”



The hostile secretaries met at the house of the Attorney-General, in the presence of that functionary and of Mr. Barry. "Here," says Eaton, "Mr. Branch expressed friendship for me, and in the strongest terms declared, that he did not entertain an unkind feeling toward me, and wished he had a glass in his bosom, through which his every thought could be read. He spoke of the non-intercourse between our families, and said, he had not the slightest objection to a free association ; but that he could not control his. I promptly answered, that I did not desire his or any other family to visit mine, except with their own free consent ; and that it was my desire our families should, in that respect, pursue such a course as they thought fit and proper. We shook hands and parted as friends. Mr. Berrien affected much satisfaction at this reconciliation, and pretended to hail it as the harbinger of future harmony and good will."

And so this affair was temporarily adjusted. For the next fifteen months there was the semblance of harmony among the members of this ill-assorted Cabinet. The President, however, did not often consult the three gentlemen who had families. The time-honored Cabinet councils were seldom held, and were at length discontinued. Mr. Van Buren maintained and strengthened his position as the President's chief counselor and friend. The President spoke of the Secretary of State, among his familiars, by the name of "Van," and called him "Matty" to his face.

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## CHAPTER XXV.

### THE PRESIDENT BREAKS WITH THE VICE-PRESIDENT.

SCARCELY had the Cabinet been pacificated, when the suppressed feud between General Jackson and Mr. Calhoun was changed, so far as the President was concerned, into avowed and irreconcilable hostility.

Mr. Van Buren has long rested under the imputation of having precipitated this quarrel for purposes of his own. The reader, however, is aware that General Jackson's antipathy to Mr. Calhoun was strong as early as December, 1829, and that Mr. Van Buren had no need, for purposes of his own, to inflame the President's ire against his Southern competitor for the succession. The incident which filled up the measure of the President's wrath against the Vice-President, it can now be shown, was one with which Mr. Van Buren had nothing to do. He was as innocent of this quarrel as the humblest clerk in his department, as Mr. Calhoun himself came at last to know.

Major Lewis, the innocent cause of the explosion, and a participant in all the events that led to it, has had the goodness to write out, for the reader's edification and entertainment, a complete history of the affair. His narrative, which is circumstantial and exact, puts to rest forever all the disputed questions respecting a feud which has produced, and is producing, effects upon the course of political events.

NARRATIVE BY MAJOR WILLIAM B. LEWIS.

"DEAR SIR: I have taken up the pen, in accordance with your request, with the view of relating to you the circumstances which led to the quarrel between General Jackson and Mr. Calhoun. In doing this, I will be as brief as the nature of the affair will admit; but, at the same time, I feel disposed to communicate every thing in connection with it that may be deemed necessary to a full and perfect understanding of the subject. I have for a long time intended to perform this task, but have neglected it, and, perhaps, should never have undertaken it, if you had not made the request. It is many years since the circumstances that I now intend to relate transpired, but all the leading and most essential portions of them are still fresh upon my mind.

"The Seminole campaign, which was commenced by General Jackson in December, 1817, and was brought to a close by him the following spring, was undoubtedly the main cause of the quarrel, but there were other circumstances that had also something to do with it, which I will relate before I get through with my narrative.

"That his proceedings in conducting that campaign should have been the cause or occasion of a rupture between them, was a thing, I am sure, the General could not possibly have anticipated, as he had been led to be-

lieve that Mr. Calhoun approved all that he had done. Perhaps there was no one connected with the government, with the exception of Mr. Monroe, in whom he had greater confidence than Mr. Calhoun, or for whom he had a stronger attachment. This was owing, in part, to the zeal, the ability, and the efficiency with which he supported, as a member of the House of Representatives, the war of 1812, but perhaps more particularly on account of one of the first acts he performed after receiving the appointment of Secretary of War. At the time of his appointment a serious misunderstanding existed between the General and the acting Secretary of War, Mr. George Graham. It seems that General Jackson, apprehending difficulty with the Indians in the Northwest, bordering upon Canada, stationed an officer in whom he had great confidence, with a suitable command, in that quarter, for the purpose of watching the Indians and British traders, but more especially, I suspect, the Earl of Selkirk, who was moving through that section of country about that time, with no good intentions, as the General believed, toward the United States.\* Well, without giving the General any notice of his intention, the acting Secretary ordered this officer upon other duty, taking him away entirely from the post where the General had stationed him. Against this he protested most energetically, denying that he had any right to interfere with the arrangement of his troops without consulting him, and forthwith issued a general order to the officers under his command, and within his military district, that in future they were to obey no order emanating from the War Department unless it passed through the general in command! It was on account of this general order that he and General Scott became involved in an angry and bitter personal correspondence.

"Mr. Calhoun, very soon after he entered upon the duties of his office as Secretary of War, in order to put a stop to such personal controversies, and to satisfy General Jackson, as it was alleged, wrote him an official letter, assuring him that, in future, all orders for his military district should pass through him.† This was granting all that the General contended for, and was exceedingly gratifying to him, and no doubt added greatly to his personal regard for the Secretary.

"It was not long after this that he was ordered on the celebrated Seminole campaign, and doubtless it was commenced with the best and kindest feelings for Mr. Calhoun, on whom he counted fully as a friend that he

\* If the General had got hold of the Earl, and been able to prove that he had been exciting the Indians against our frontier settlements, he would in all probability have made his a *precedent* for the cases of Arbuthnot and Ambrister.

† See a copy of Mr. Calhoun's letter of December 29, 1819, herewith inclosed.—Vol. ii., p. 375.

could at all times and under all circumstances rely to do him justice, at least; and more than this he neither expected nor desired, of course.

“ After the campaign had been brought to a close, the General returned to Tennessee in exceedingly bad health, and worn almost to a skeleton; but he had scarcely got home when a portion of the newspaper press, aided by politicians and demagogues, commenced assailing him with great violence and bitterness, which was kept up until Congress met, in November, 1818. This body had scarcely taken their seats, when strong indications were given by its members that the attacks were soon to be transferred from the columns of the newspapers and the stump to the halls of Congress. The General was kept well advised of what was going on both in and out of Congress by his Washington friends. About the latter part of December or the first of January, it was reported that the military committee of the House was investigating the General's conduct in relation to the Seminole campaign, and it was believed they would report to the House a resolution in favor of censuring him. He received this information in Nashville, on the morning of the 7th of January, and determined at once to leave for Washington without a moment's delay. After having dispatched some business he came down to attend to, he returned to the Hermitage in the evening, and the next morning early he set out for Washington on horseback, accompanied by two of his staff. Traveling rapidly on to Kingston, a distance of 160 miles, he fell in with the Washington mail stage, and concluding to leave their horses at Kingston, he and his companions took passage in the stage and proceeded on to Washington in that. On his route he passed through Knoxville, Abingdon, and Winchester, Virginia, but having reached the last named place too late to make a connection with the Washington stage, he and his companions were necessarily detained for a short time.

“ When the citizens of the village heard of his arrival and detention, they flocked in great numbers to see and pay their respects to him; but some of the most ardent of his admirers, not satisfied with this manifestation of respect, proceeded to get up, on the spur of the occasion, a small supper party, and invited him and his traveling companions to join them. The invitation was accepted, and in the course of the evening, being called on for a sentiment, the General gave the following toast—‘ John C. Calhoun; an honest man is the noblest work of God’—showing in the strongest and most emphatic language he could use, the great confidence he reposed in his honor and integrity! But this is not the only occasion in which his confidence had been manifested, as I shall presently show. An arrangement having been effected for the continuance of the General's journey to Washington, distant seventy-five or eighty miles, he and his friends left, and reached that city on the morning of the 23d of January, 1819, a little before sunrise. The second letter he wrote me after his ar-

rival is dated 30th January, and is in relation to certain injurious imputations which had been published in the *Philadelphia Aurora* newspaper, against Mr. Calhoun, by a Nashville correspondent, which, if in my power, he wished me to have corrected. The General, in his letter, says—‘I find Mr. Calhoun is sore from the remarks made by B. B. in the *Philadelphia Aurora*. He has professed to be my friend, approves my conduct and that of the President. Mr. Monroe has told the members, if an opportunity offers, to declare on the floor of Congress, in addition to what Mr. Adams has said, that he fully and warmly approves every act of mine, from first to last, of the Seminole campaign.’ In a P. S. to his letter, the General adds, ‘If you know B. B., tell him to exonerate Mr. Calhoun from a coalition with Mr. Crawford.’

“Those communications, addressed to the *Aurora*, were written by me, and the passage complained of by Mr. Calhoun is in the following words—‘I regret that I am under the necessity of admitting that your suspicions, as regards the Secretary of War, are not altogether groundless. Late information from Washington City assures us here that he is playing a double game. This may be so, but for the honor of human nature, I hope it is not. I can not abandon altogether the good opinion I once entertained of him, at least not until I have other evidence of his duplicity than that which rests upon mere suspicion. I still flatter myself that my correspondent there, as well as you, may be mistaken.’

“After the receipt of the General’s letter referred to above, in my next communication to the *Aurora*, dated the 20th February, 1819, I state that, ‘In my letter to you of the 9th, and published in the *Aurora* of the 28th ultimo, I remarked that it was with regret that I was under the necessity of admitting that your suspicions, as it regarded the Secretary of State, were not altogether groundless—that late intelligence from Washington City assured us here he was playing a double game, etc. I had been informed, previous to writing that letter, that Mr. Calhoun had, at the same time he was professing the warmest friendship for General Jackson, joined the standard of his enemies, who had combined for the laudable purpose, not only of undermining his military reputation, but also to drive him from the army. It affords me great pleasure to find that my correspondent had been led into an error, in attributing to Mr. Calhoun a course of conduct so dishonorable. In justice to him, therefore, I feel it my duty to state that I am entirely satisfied *now* his conduct has been honorable and correct, and that he is, as he has always professed to be, the sincere friend of General Jackson,’ etc.

“This, then, was a full and complete withdrawal of the alleged unjust imputation made against Mr. Calhoun, in the letter to the *Aurora* of the 9th January, 1819, and of course left no cause of complaint, whether just or unjust, against General Jackson or his friends. The General acted, on

this occasion, as a true and sincere friend, by promptly doing all that was in his power to have the alleged unjust imputations withdrawn. But this is not all. I have additional evidence to show that the General's friendship for Mr. Calhoun continued for years after the date of the letter referred to above. On the 11th January, 1825, in a letter addressed to me, he says—'It was stated to me yesterday, that if I was elected, it would be against the whole Cabinet influence, combined with that of the Speaker. If this be true, and success should be mine, it will be the greater triumph of principle over intrigue and management. Whether there is any truth in this rumor I know not, and if there is, I would suppose that Mr. Calhoun is not in the combination. Let things terminate as they may, nothing will induce me to depart from the course I have adopted. If I go into the office, it shall be by the unsolicited will of the people, and I shall not envy the man who gets there in any other way.' Even this is not all. I received another letter from him after the election of Mr. Adams, in which he says, 'I am satisfied that Mr. Calhoun was the only friend I had in the Cabinet.'

This letter has, unfortunately, been mislaid, and not being able to lay my hands on it just now, I am not able to give the exact date of it. I have a distinct recollection, however, of the expression quoted above.

"I have adverted to the foregoing facts and circumstances as evidences going to show conclusively that General Jackson looked upon Mr. Calhoun as one of his best friends, so late as the winter and spring of 1825. Indeed I might say to the day of his inauguration on the 4th of March, 1829, as there is not a particle of evidence in existence, as I believe, to prove the slightest change in their personal relations to that time. In February, 1825, at a time of great political excitement, when every bosom was filled with suspicion and distrust, we find the General declaring that he considered Mr. Calhoun the only friend he had in Mr. Monroe's Cabinet on that important and eventful occasion. Strong proof this, I should say, of his confidence in him, as well as his own sincerity and fidelity. But was this confidence and devotion on the part of the General reciprocated by Mr. Calhoun? I doubt it, and I think I have good reason for doubting it. If any one will attentively read a certain part of Mr. Webster's great speech in reply to Colonel Hayne of South Carolina, in February, 1830, I think he will be induced to doubt whether Mr. Calhoun was the only friend that the General had in Mr. Monroe's Cabinet, pending the contest in the House for the presidency; or, indeed, whether he was his friend at all. I allude to that portion of Mr. Webster's speech which is in reply to Colonel Hayne's Shakesperian quotations in which he made allusion to Banquo's Ghost. I did not see the point and force of the remarks at the time the speech was delivered, because I had never heard it intimated, or suggested by any one that Mr. Calhoun was really in favor of Mr. Adams being chosen

by the House, in preference to General Jackson; nor did I understand it until I was told by a gentleman, whom I met at a dining party at the house of the illustrious Charles Carroll of Carrollton, on the 20th September, 1831 (Mr. Carroll's birth-day), that Mr. Calhoun had *actually pledged himself to support Mr. Adams*. I do not recollect his name, but he was said to be a gentleman of high character, and lived in the neighborhood of Carrollton. He did not speak of it as a rumor, but as a 'fixed fact,' as General Cushing would say. This was perfectly new to me, but when I connected with it Webster's splendid reply to Hayne, and his pointing and shaking his finger, at the same time, at Calhoun (who was in the chair), and exclaiming with great significance, 'Is it not so, sir?' I must confess that I do not feel myself at liberty to doubt it. If I have not misconstrued the meaning of Mr. Webster's remarks, there can be no doubt that Mr. Calhoun secretly favored the election of Mr. Adams, and promised him his support; but finding, afterward, that Mr. Clay was to be brought within the line of 'safe precedents,' and looked to for the succession, he deserted Mr. Adams and sought shelter beneath the folds of the broad and patriotic banner of Old Hickory. It did not, however, afford him protection long. You know how the General dealt with deserters, whether regulars or militia!

"I will now proceed to relate the circumstances which led to the breach and final separation of those distinguished men. At the session of 1827 the legislature of Louisiana adopted a resolution inviting General Jackson to unite with his friends of that State, on the 8th of February, 1828, in celebrating the anniversary of the great victory achieved over the British forces on the 8th January, 1815. The invitation was accepted by the General and, during the Christmas holidays, the 27th December, 1827, I think it was, he left Nashville for New Orleans on board the steamboat *Pocahontas*, commanded by Captain Barnes, which had been tendered to him by the owners, free of all charges, for the conveyance of himself and friends to New Orleans, and back again to Nashville. Among the friends of the General, who took passage on board the *Pocahontas* was Colonel James A. Hamilton, son of the distinguished General Alexander Hamilton of the Revolution. The Colonel was a member of a committee that had been appointed by the General's friends of the city of New York, to meet him at New Orleans and unite with his other friends there, in celebrating the 8th January, and proposed, with the consent of the other members of the committee (Thaddeus Phelps and Preserved Fish, I believe) to come by the way of Nashville and pass down the river with the General and his Tennessee friends. The party consisted of the General, Mrs. Jackson and Major Donelson of his family; General Houston and staff, Judge Overton, Dr. and Mrs. Shelly, myself and a few others whose names are not now recollected. Having time to spare, the *Pocahontas* leisurely descended the



river, stopping at a few places only until she reached Natchez, where, by previous engagement, the General was to partake of a public dinner given to him by his friends and old comrades-in-arms. Here we were detained until late in the evening, when the *Pocahontas* was again got under way, and dropped slowly down the river, on her way to the great emporium of the Southwestern States. About this time, and on this portion of our journey it was, I had an interesting conversation with Colonel Hamilton which led, ultimately, to very important results. On several previous occasions we had conversed about the pending presidential election, and of the General's prospects generally; but on this occasion he inquired of me particularly with regard to the vote of Georgia. I told him the General's friends at Nashville were of the opinion that the probabilities were in favor of his getting it, unless Mr. Crawford's friends should unite in opposition to him, and possibly in that event he might lose it.

"'But we count much, Colonel,' I said, 'upon the general Southern feeling which is undoubtedly in favor of the General.'

"He inquired of me if I did not think Mr. Crawford and his friends might be conciliated.

"'If that can be done,' he added, 'Georgia would undoubtedly give her vote to the General.'

"He thought it was an object deserving the attention of his friends, and expressed a willingness to assist, if desired, in removing all doubts and difficulties in relation to the vote of that important Southern State. Colonel Hamilton then inquired if I was acquainted with the original cause of quarrel between the General and Mr. Crawford.

"'Yes,' I told him, 'I knew all about it from the beginning to that time.'

"'I should like very much,' he said, 'to be made acquainted with all the circumstances in relation to it.'

"'The original cause,' I remarked, 'grew out of a treaty Mr. Crawford made, in the spring of 1816, with the Cherokee Indians, when he was Secretary of War, against the advice and remonstrance of the General. In this treaty Mr. Crawford allowed them a large body of land to which they had no claim whatever, and which had been previously ceded to the United States by the Creek Indians. In the summer of 1814 the General made a treaty at Fort Jackson with the Creeks, after their surrender and submission to the authorities of the United States, and in that treaty the whole of the country from the settlements on the Bay of Mobile to the Tennessee line, a distance of some two hundred or two hundred and fifty miles, including nearly all the State of Alabama, and which he considered of great importance to the whole country, and vitally so as regarded the growth and prosperity of the southwestern portion of it, was ceded to the United States.



“ ‘The Cherokee chiefs were present at that treaty, and claimed a large portion of the land, the best and most important portion, but from a full investigation of the matter it was clearly shown that they had no right to it whatever. They endeavored to get the Creeks to say it belonged to them, alleging, as a reason, they would have to give it up at any rate. Weatherford, the principal chief of the Creek nation, refused. He said it did not belong to them, and he would make no such admission. Yet, in opposition to the advice of the General, Mr. Crawford recognized the claim of the Cherokees to it, at the risk of sacrificing the great advantages which were secured to us by the Treaty of Fort Jackson.\*

“ ‘The General had two important objects in view, in requiring the Creeks to cede to the United States the whole of that vast tract of land as an indemnity for the expenses of the war. First, to separate the Creeks and Cherokees, on the east, from the Choctaws and Chickasaws, on the west, by planting a dense and strong population of whites between them, who, in future, would hold them in check. Secondly, by opening and settling that region of country, to strengthen and give protection to Mobile and the settlements upon the bay. Every body now must see the wisdom and foresight of his views, who has any knowledge of the immense population and wealth embraced within the limits of the country ceded by the Fort Jackson Treaty. Under all the circumstances, it is not at all surprising, it seems to me, that the General should have felt indignant at the unaccountable conduct of the Secretary of War.

“ ‘But,’ I remarked to Colonel Hamilton, ‘this is not the only thing the General complains of, and concerning which he was exceedingly sensitive. He was induced to believe that Mr. Crawford had a principal agency in getting up the movement in Congress against him in January, 1819, upon the subject of the Seminole campaign. This he inferred from the active part his personal friends were taking against him in Congress, and more especially Mr. Cobb, who represented Mr. Crawford’s district in Congress, and was a confidential and devoted friend of his, and all of whom zealously supported the resolution of censure, reported to the House of Representatives by the Military Committee. However, I have not heard the General say much about Mr. Crawford of late,’ I observed; ‘indeed, I may say, nothing, since Mr. Adams was chosen President over both of them, by the House, in 1825! Nor do I know what are his feelings now in relation to those old disputes. His mind, of late, has been too much occupied, I presume, with matters of higher import than to dwell upon things that have become obsolete.’

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\* This is called the “Treaty of Fort Jackson;” but, more properly speaking, it was a *capitulation*; an act of surrendering to an enemy, upon stipulated terms or conditions. A sufficient quantity of their land was demanded by the government of the United States to indemnify them for the expenses of the war.  
—W. B. L.

“Colonel Hamilton said that he was very desirous that a reconciliation should be effected, if possible, between them, and asked me if I would be willing to speak to the General upon the subject. He intended, he said, in returning to New York, to pass through the Southern States, and expected to see Mr. Crawford, and nothing would give him more pleasure than to be the medium of a reconciliation between them. I told him if he desired it I would, with great pleasure, speak to the General upon the subject, and let him know what he thought of it. I accordingly sought an opportunity of having a conversation with the General in relation to the matter. After informing him what Colonel Hamilton had said, and the strong desire he felt that a reconciliation should take place between him and Mr. Crawford, he remarked to me that formerly his feelings toward Mr. Crawford had been pretty bitter, and he thought he had sufficient grounds for them, but the causes which gave birth to them had all passed away, and that he had no longer any such feelings.

“‘Mr. Crawford,’ he added, ‘is truly an unfortunate man, and is more deserving sympathy than the enmity of any one, and especially on account of his physical prostration.’

“‘Am I at liberty, then,’ I asked, ‘to say to Colonel Hamilton that you are willing that every thing heretofore of an unpleasant nature shall be buried in oblivion?’

“‘Perfectly so,’ was his answer.

“I related this to the Colonel, who was exceedingly gratified at it, and said he had no doubt it would be cordially responded to by Mr. Crawford.

“We were now rapidly approaching the great center of attraction. Many steamboats had passed us crowded with passengers. It looked as if all the boats that belonged to the great father of rivers, and its numerous tributaries, had so managed and regulated their affairs as to be at Orleans on the 8th of January, and taking with them immense crowds from the great West and Southwest.

“It was now the 7th, and we were but a few miles above Orleans, and our noble boat *Pocahontas* was rounded to, and we landed about an hour before sunset, where we remained until about eleven o'clock the next day. The weather was clear, warm, and bright, promising a beautiful day for the celebration of the ever memorable and glorious eighth. But promises are not always to be relied on, and in this case they were completely falsified. The following morning was dark and gloomy. In the south was to be seen a heavy cloud, giving unmistakable indications of an approaching thunder storm, which were realized about nine or ten o'clock, when the rain commenced falling in torrents, accompanied by thunder and lightning. It did not last long, however, and was followed by a most magnificent rainbow, which seemed to span the entire city, and was considered

by the people a most auspicious omen. I am not going to bore you with an account of the celebration. If so disposed, I am not competent to do it justice. It was undoubtedly the most magnificent pageant I ever saw of the kind, and I have seen many. Besides, it would be out of place here. Suffice it to say that the General was feasted and caressed by his friends some five or six days, and he then left for Nashville on board the *Pocahontas*, under the command of his true and trusty friend, Capt. Barnes. Before she was permitted to leave the landing, however, she was literally crammed with all sorts of good things, such as wines, brandy, fruits, sweet-meats, etc., by his kind and grateful friends, whose city he had saved from murder, pillage, rapine, and other crimes of a still more revolting character, if what was averred at the time can be relied on as true.

"Col. Hamilton left about the same time, but he, as he said he should do on our trip down, returned through Georgia, Virginia, etc. The General and his party reached Nashville without the occurrence of a single accident from the time we left home. I heard nothing of Col. Hamilton from the time we parted in New Orleans.

"Soon after I returned to Nashville I received a letter from Mr. Eaton, one of our Senators in Congress, informing me that my daughter, who was at school in Philadelphia, was quite ill, and had been so for some time, and added he thought I had better come on to see her without delay.

"The day after I got his letter, the 3d April, 1828, I left for Philadelphia, taking Washington in my route, and on reaching that city, I learned from Mr. Eaton that he had just got a letter from the lady who had charge of my daughter, informing him that she was much better.

"This was very gratifying news, and made it unnecessary for me to hasten my departure from Washington. While there I was made acquainted with Mr. Van Buren, it being the first time I had ever met with him. I found the General's friends were all in high spirits, and counting with great certainty upon his being elected. Indeed, I found the same confidence existing among his friends everywhere, from the time I left home until I reached the city. After remaining a few days, I left for Philadelphia, and was happy to find, on my arrival, that my daughter's health, under the skillful treatment of that eminent physician, Dr. Physic, had been entirely restored. I did not remain long, however, in that city; and, as I was anxious to get back home, I hurried on to New York, which, never having visited, I desired to see. The morning after my arrival there I called upon Col. Hamilton, and had a long conversation with him in relation to his trip through the Southern States. Every thing in that quarter, he assured me, looked bright and promising. Our friends, he added, were confident of carrying every State for the General. I inquired of him if he saw Mr. Crawford as he passed through Milledgeville. He said he did not, unfortunately, in consequence of his being out on his circuit holding

court, and was not expected to return for a week or two. He regretted it, but it was impossible for him to wait, and had, therefore, concluded to mention the subject he desired to speak to Mr. Crawford about to Governor Forsyth. He related to the Governor fully the conversation we had on board of the boat as we passed down the river, and also what passed between the General and myself upon the subject of an amicable settlement of the differences which had so long existed between him and Mr. Crawford, and desired the Governor to communicate it to Mr. Crawford when he returned to Milledgeville. This he promised to do, and advise me of the reply that Mr. Crawford might make to it. I inquired of him if he had heard from the Governor in relation to the matter since. He said that he had, and he was greatly surprised at what Mr. Crawford had authorized him to say. He (Mr. Crawford) remarked that he had been charged with having proposed, in cabinet council, to have the General arrested, etc., which he said was false. No such proposition was ever made by him; but that Mr. Calhoun did propose his arrest and punishment in some way, showing on various occasions a hostility to his proceedings in his Seminole campaign. Col. Hamilton handed me Governor Forsyth's letter to read, and I confess I was not less surprised than the Colonel seemed to be, knowing, as I did, the pains Mr. Calhoun had taken to impress upon the General's mind that he had stood firmly by him, and sustained him in relation to his proceedings in that celebrated campaign. In January, 1819, I received information from Washington which induced me to doubt the sincerity of Mr. Calhoun's friendship for the General, and so stated in a communication I sent to the *Philadelphia Aurora*: but on receiving a letter from General Jackson, assuring me he had no doubt of the sincerity of his friendship, and requesting me to have the statement alluded to above contradicted, I had, from that time until I saw Governor Forsyth's letter, looked upon him as a sincere friend of the General. I do not recollect the exact words of Mr. Crawford, as reported by Governor Forsyth, but what is stated above is substantially correct.

"I did not remain long in New York, and on returning home, I proposed to avail myself of the opportunity of running up the Hudson to Albany, and thence along the entire line of New York's great and magnificent canal, which had not then been long finished. I found the route rather tedious and uncomfortable, but the opportunity it afforded me of seeing such a work and the fine country through which it ran, was a sufficient compensation for the want of comfort. I got back to Nashville about the 1st of June, fully convinced that the coalition of Adams and Clay was doomed to experience a most humiliating defeat at the approaching election, and I sought an early opportunity of so stating to the General. But I did not think it advisable to say any thing to him about Governor Forsyth's letter to Colonel Hamilton, from an apprehension that it might

produce an explosion, as he had been kept under a constant excitement for the last twelve or eighteen months by the attacks of his enemies on himself and Mrs. Jackson; and to be made acquainted with 'this unkindest cut of all' by the hand of one whom he had considered a true friend, I was afraid would be more than he could bear; and as I was not particularly desirous of witnessing such an exhibition just at that time, I thought it best not to mention it to him.

"Well, the election took place in November, and, as every intelligent man in the country, not blinded by passion, or partisan feelings, supposed would be the case months before it occurred, the General was elected by an overwhelming majority. That was the verdict which the people rendered upon the charges of bargain, intrigue, and corruption, made against Adams and Clay, and which has never been revised, though three efforts have been made without effect, one in the person of Mr. Adams, and two in the person of Mr. Clay.

"The General left home in the latter part of January, 1829, for Washington, and reached that city on the 9th or 10th, I think, of February.

"We found the town crowded with strangers even at that early day, and the number rapidly increased from that time until the inauguration. Great anxiety was felt by the politicians in relation to the organization of the new Cabinet. Jealousy, distrust, and dissatisfaction soon became manifest to the most casual observer. All wanted a friend in the Cabinet, but as the number was limited to six, all could not, of course, be gratified. The friends of Mr. Calhoun were the most dissatisfied, when it was understood who were to compose the Cabinet. Although *one half* the members were expected to be his friends, still they were not satisfied, because they were not *exactly* the friends they wanted in the Cabinet. There was no one from South Carolina. The General proposed to appoint Mr. Eaton, a personal friend of his from Tennessee, but the friends of Mr. Calhoun made great efforts to prevent it, and to have either Colonel Hayne or General Hamilton of South Carolina substituted for him. Having failed in this, nothing daunted, they still kept up their efforts with the hope of being able to drive him (Eaton) the personal friend of the General out of the Cabinet. This the President considered very unkind, to say the least of it. He did not know that Mr. Calhoun encouraged this proceeding on the part of his friends, *still he thought he could have put a stop to it, if so disposed*. The truth is, that many of General Jackson's friends believed that the support of him by the friends of Mr. Calhoun was, from the first, a secondary consideration with them. That they were using his popularity and strength with which to break down Adams and Clay; and then at the close of the General's first term, to set him aside (Adams and Clay having been previously put out of the way), and elevate Mr. Calhoun to the presidency.

And really, it seems to me, that their conduct after the election would justify such a conclusion.

"This state of things continued without much change or variation, until the following November. Mr. Monroe, ex-president, had been in Richmond attending a State convention, as one of its delegates, and after it adjourned, on his way home he passed through Washington, and remained a day or two with the view of seeing his old friends and acquaintances. While there, as a matter of course, he called to see General Jackson. The General invited him to dine with him, and, on this occasion he also invited the members of the cabinet, and Mr. Finch Ringold, Marshal of the District of Columbia, and a warm, personal, and confidential friend of Mr. Monroe's. The dinner party consisted of the President, ex-President Monroe, members of the Cabinet, Mr. Ringold, Major Donelson, and myself. Mr. Monroe sat on the right hand of the President, Mr. Eaton on the left, Mr. Ringold next to Mr. Eaton, and I sat at the end of the table, having Mr. Ringold between me and Mr. Eaton. The other members of the Cabinet sat on the opposite side of the table, the Secretary of State fronting the President, and Major Donelson at the other end of the table fronting me. This was the exact arrangement with regard to the position of each member of the party.

"Some short time after the company was seated, Mr. Ringold remarked to me that he was glad to see the General and Mr. Monroe together, and enjoying themselves so well. Mr. Monroe, he said, was a great friend of his upon the subject of his Seminole campaign, and stood by him with great firmness in opposition to every member of his Cabinet. I remarked I always understood Mr. Monroe approved the General's proceedings in that campaign, and was decidedly his friend; but I was not aware that he was the only one of his Cabinet.

" 'Yes, sir,' he said, 'he was the *only one*.'

" 'Well, then, if that be so, the General has been laboring under a very great mistake,' I replied, 'for he has always been under the impression that Mr. Calhoun was also decidedly his friend.'

"Mr. Ringold insisted that he was not. Believing that Mr. Ringold possessed as fully the confidence of Mr. Monroe as any man in Washington during his administration, I was desirous of drawing him out fully upon this, at one time, very exciting subject, and therefore continued the conversation.

" 'Well, then,' I asked, 'what will you do with Mr. Adams? Do you not recollect that he wrote a long and very able letter to our minister, justifying the course of the General in that campaign, and vindicating the government in its approval of all his acts?'

" 'Yes,' he said, 'I remember it very well. It is true, he did write a

very able letter to our minister in Madrid ; but,' said he, 'the General is under no obligations to *him* for it, for Mr. Monroe made him do it.'

" ' Well, really Mr. Ringold, you surprise me more than ever. With most of the General's Tennessee friends, Mr. Adams would have been their choice for the presidency, had the General not been a candidate.'

" ' Well, sir,' said he, 'they were under no obligations to Mr. Adams for writing that letter.'

" And he repeated that Mr. Monroe was the *only member* of his Cabinet that was in favor of sustaining the General in every thing he did. After this I spoke to Mr. Eaton, and asked him if he had heard the conversation between Mr. Ringold and myself? He said he had not; that he had been conversing with the gentleman on the opposite side of the table. He inquired what we had been talking about. I told him that Mr. Ringold had assured me there was not a single member of Mr. Monroe's Cabinet who approved of General Jackson's course in Florida, when prosecuting his Seminole campaign, but Mr. Monroe himself. Mr. Eaton said he must be mistaken, as both Mr. Adams and Mr. Calhoun were considered very decided friends of the General in relation to his proceedings on that occasion. Mr. Ringold repeated they were not, and that Mr. Monroe stood alone upon that subject in his Cabinet. Here the conversation ended.

" After dinner was over the company retired to the parlor, but did not remain long before they all left, with the exception of Mr. Eaton. The General rang for a servant, and ordered his pipe to be brought to him, as was his usual habit, after the company had withdrawn.

" His pipe was brought, and he seemed to be in deep meditation while smoking, and, as I supposed, was paying no attention to the conversation between Mr. Eaton and myself. He heard me, however, inquire of Mr. Eaton if the remarks of Mr. Ringold about the Seminole war and Mr. Monroe's cabinet did not surprise him; and, starting up from his apparent reverie, demanded to know what we were talking about. Mr. Eaton repeated to him what Mr. Ringold had said at the dinner-table, in relation to the Seminole campaign, and the opposition of Mr. Monroe's entire cabinet to the General's course. He seemed, however, to be incredulous, and remarked that Mr. Ringold must be mistaken.

" I replied, 'I am not sure of that.'

" ' Why are you not ?' inquired the General.

" ' Because I have seen a letter, written eighteen months ago, in which Mr. Crawford is represented as saying that you charged him with having taken strong ground against you in Mr. Monroe's cabinet, but in that you had done him injustice, for it was not he, but Mr. Calhoun, who was in favor of your being arrested, or punished in some other way.'

" ' You saw such a letter as *that*?' he inquired.

" Yes, I told him I had, and read it too.



“ ‘Where is that letter?’

“ ‘In New York,’ I replied.

“ ‘In whose hands, and by whom written?’

“ ‘It is in the hands of Col. Hamilton, and written by Governor Forsyth, of Georgia,’ I answered.

“ ‘Then,’ said he, ‘I want to see it, and you must go to New York to-morrow.’

“ ‘Very well; if you desire it, I have not the least objection.’

“In the morning, the General still insisting on my going to New York, I left in the early stage, and reached that city in the evening of the second day.

“After supper, I called upon Col. Hamilton, and informed him of the object of my visit to him. He said, as regarded himself, he would have no objection to send Governor Forsyth’s letter to the General, but he thought it would be more respectful to the Governor to see him first and ask his consent. He remarked that Congress would meet in a few days, and as the Governor had just been elected to the United States Senate, he would soon be in Washington, and ‘I will meet him there and speak to him on the subject.’

“ ‘If that arrangement will be satisfactory to the General,’ he said, ‘I would prefer it; but if he should not be willing to wait until then, write me, and I will come to Washington, and bring the letter with me.’

“I told him, as the proposition was a reasonable one, I thought the General would be perfectly willing to wait until the Governor got to Washington. On my return, I saw the General, and related to him the arrangements the Colonel and myself had made, and he expressed himself entirely satisfied with it. The meeting of Congress, which took place a few days after, brought Governor Forsyth and Col. Hamilton together, as was expected; and, on talking over the matter, the Governor said he would prefer that Mr. Crawford should be written to upon the subject, that he might speak for himself over his own signature, which, no doubt, he would do without the least hesitation. He preferred that course, he added, because his remarks to him, as stated in his letter to Col. Hamilton, possibly might not be altogether correct. With this understanding they came to my office, and informed me of the course it was thought most advisable to take.

“I agreed with them entirely, and told Col. Hamilton I had no doubt the General himself would prefer that Mr. Crawford should be written to, and his statement obtained over his own signature. He then proposed that we should go and see the President, and inform him of the proposed arrangement. We started immediately for the President’s house, but the Governor, according to my recollection, did not accompany us, alleging that it was necessary for him to return to the Capitol.



"Col. Hamilton, however, informed the General what it was proposed to do, and if it met his approbation, Governor Forsyth would immediately write to Mr. Crawford upon the subject. The General said all he wanted was Mr. Crawford's statement, and if it was proposed to have it in his own hand-writing, so much the better. Governor Forsyth accordingly wrote to Mr. Crawford, and in due time a letter was received from him confirming what had been stated in the letter to Col. Hamilton, with a few explanations and modifications. The General was then furnished with a copy of it, which he inclosed in a letter to Mr. Calhoun, dated May 13, 1830, which was the commencement of the celebrated correspondence between those distinguished men that led to an open rupture and final separation.

"Mr. Calhoun, in his correspondence with the General, says, 'I should be blind not to see that this whole affair is a political maneuver, in which the design is that you should be the instrument and myself the victim, but in which the real actors are carefully concealed by an artful movement.' Again he says, 'Your character is of too high and generous a cast to resort to such means, either for your own advantage or that of others. This the *contrivers* of the *plot* well knew,' etc. Who the contrivers, plotters, and actors in these political designs against him were, can only be conjectured, as he does not name them. If he intended to include me as one of them, I know he labored under a great mistake; and I think he is equally mistaken with regard to others who, probably, are alluded to. Indeed, I think he was mistaken in supposing that there was any plot at all, of any kind, got up for the purpose of making a political victim of him. The Crawford developments which led to the correspondence between the General and himself originated, undoubtedly, in the conversation between Col. Hamilton and myself, on board the steamboat, on our way to New Orleans, in relation to a reconciliation between the General and Mr. Crawford. In that conversation not one word was said about Mr. Calhoun or Mr. Van Buren, who, no doubt, was one of the persons to whom Mr. Calhoun alludes in the extracts I have quoted above. In proposing a reconciliation, Col. Hamilton seemed to be actuated alone by a desire to place the vote of Georgia for the General beyond the possibility of a doubt. If he had any other motive or desire, he did not disclose it to me. However, knowing the warmth of the Colonel's friendship for Mr. Crawford, I thought it possible he might have another object in view, but of a very different character from what Mr. Calhoun supposed. Mr. Crawford was said to be a man of very slender means, and I thought it possible Colonel Hamilton desired that he and the General should be on good terms, with the hope, in case the General should be elected, of having him provided for under the federal government with a situation that would be more acceptable than the small office he at that time held under the State of

Georgia. But this is mere conjecture on my part, for Colonel Hamilton did not make the slightest intimation of the kind in his conversation with me.

"With regard to Governor Forsyth's letter to Colonel Hamilton, I have no recollection of having ever spoken of it to any one, and probably should not have done so, if it had not been for the remarks of Mr. Ringold at the President's dinner-table. The whole affair was, as I verily believe, the result of accident.

"It has been said, I know, that Mr. Van Buren was instrumental, indeed the *principal* agent, in getting up this quarrel; but, so far as my knowledge extends, I am bound, in justice to him, to say, that I think there is not the slightest grounds for such an imputation. When the General received Mr. Calhoun's long letter of the 29th May, 1830, in answer to his of the 13th of that month, inclosing a copy of Mr. Crawford's, it was on a Sunday morning, and just as he was about to step into his carriage to go to church. On ascertaining it was from Mr. Calhoun, he came up to my room and requested me to look over it in his absence, and note such portions of it as would require his particular attention. On his return he inquired if I had read it.

" 'I have,' I replied.

" 'Have you made any notes?'

" 'I have made no notes, General, for the reason that I think it is necessary you should read the whole letter before you make any reply to it.'

"I then handed it to him, and he retired to his own room to read it; but he had time to read a small portion of it only before dinner was announced. When he came down he appeared to be excited, but said nothing, and as soon as dinner was over he returned to his own room and finished reading it. After having got through with the letter he sent for me, and, I must say, I never saw him more excited under any circumstances in my life than he was on this occasion. He said he had never been so much deceived in any man as he had been in Mr. Calhoun—a man for whom he had the warmest friendship, and in whom he had reposed the most unbounded confidence.

" 'In this letter (holding Mr. Calhoun's letter in his hand) he has acknowledged every thing with which he is charged by Mr. Crawford, and which is in direct contradiction of all his previous assurances made to me in relation to the Seminole campaign.'

"Pausing for a moment, and seeming to suppress his feelings, he handed me the letter, and requested me to take it to Mr. Van Buren and ask him to read it, and let him know what he (Mr. Van Buren) thought of it. I stepped over with it to Mr. Van Buren's, and directed the servant at the door to say to him I wished to see him in his office for a few moments.

When he came down I remarked that the General had received a letter that morning from Mr. Calhoun, in reply to his of the 13th, and had directed me to hand it to him, with the request that 'you will read it and let him know what you think of it.' He took the letter out of my hand, opened it, and commenced reading; but when he got to the bottom of the first page, he stopped and very deliberately folded it up again, and said:

" 'Major, I prefer not to read Mr. Calhoun's letter, for I see it is to end in an open rupture between him and the General, and I have no doubt but an attempt will be made to hold me responsible for it. Under these circumstances it may become necessary for me to make a public statement, and as I have have had nothing whatever to do with it, in fact know nothing about it, I want to have it in my power to say so with a clear conscience.'

"He then handed the letter back to me, and begged that I would explain to the General his reason for not reading it. When I returned to the President, he inquired if I had seen Mr. Van Buren. I told him I had.

" 'What does he think of Mr. Calhoun's letter?'

" 'Mr. Van Buren thinks it is best for him that he should not read it,' and I gave him his reasons for declining to do so. He smiled, and remarked,

" 'I reckon Van is right. I dare say they will attempt to throw the whole blame upon him.'

"He requested me to hand him the letter, and said 'its receipt must be acknowledged this evening, as Mr. Calhoun will leave in the Richmond boat to-night, or very early in the morning, and I want him to receive my reply before he gets off.' He then stepped into his office, acknowledged, in a short note, his letter of the day before, asked me to copy it, which being done, he dispatched his messenger with it immediately.

"It has been frequently stated that this quarrel had its origin in the Eaton affair. This is a mistake. That the latter was the occasion of much excitement, as well as great bitterness of feeling, there is no doubt, but of *itself* it would not have caused a separation between the General and Mr. Calhoun. It is also true that nearly all those who exerted themselves, *first* to prevent Mr. Eaton's appointment as a member of the Cabinet, and afterward, having failed in that, to drive him out of it, were the friends of Mr. Calhoun. The General, however, did not seem disposed to hold him accountable for the acts of his friends, though he did think he could have controlled them if he had been so disposed; yet, according to Mr. Calhoun's own logic, the General would have been justified in doing so. In his long letter to him (May 29, 1830), speaking of the course of Mr. Crawford's friends in both houses of Congress, upon the subject of the Seminole campaign, he says, '*Why, then, did he (Mr. Crawford) not interpose with his*

*friends on the Committee to do you justice?* If it were the duty of Mr. Crawford, the sworn enemy, at that time, of the General, to interfere with his friends to do him justice, how much more so was it the duty of Mr. Calhoun, his avowed friend, to interfere with *his* friends, who were trying to break up his Cabinet at the very commencement of his administration!

"You must have a pretty correct idea of the extent of those efforts, as I showed you, when here, a manuscript book containing the correspondence between the General and the Rev. Dr. Ely, and others, having reference to the same subject. In order to put a stop to such impertinent interference with his public duties, he wrote down on a blank piece of paper, several days before his inauguration, the names of those he intended to bring into his Cabinet, and handed it to me, with the request that I would take it down to the *Telegraph* office, the Jackson organ, and hand it to General Green, the editor and proprietor, and say to him, 'I want it published in the *Telegraph* of to-morrow morning.' General Green, in looking over the list, was evidently disconcerted. He remarked to me that he regretted to see Mr. Eaton's name on it.

" 'Why so,' I asked.

" 'Because,' he said, 'if Mr. Eaton is taken into the Cabinet, I think it will cause both him and the General a great deal of trouble, which I should exceedingly regret.'

"As General Green was a devoted friend of Mr. Calhoun, and perfectly conversant with the feelings and views of his friends generally, I thought the remark presaged no good to the incoming administration. I will do General Green, however, the justice to say, that I do not believe he had the least hostility to Mr. Eaton. On the contrary, I believe he had kind and friendly feelings for him at that time at least. I simply remarked, in reply to his objection to Mr. Eaton's being brought into the Cabinet, that the General had made up his mind on that subject, and I did not think it could be now changed. The names of the gentlemen who were to compose the new Cabinet were published in the *Telegraph* the next morning.

"But did this put an end to annoyance to the President upon that subject? Not at all! On the following evening he received a call from Colonel Towson, a gallant and distinguished military officer, and at that time the Paymaster-General of the United States army. The parlor, as usual, was crowded, and the Colonel finding there was no chance of speaking to the General privately, asked if there was any room in which he could have a private interview with him for a few minutes?

" 'Certainly,' the General said, and invited him to his bed chamber.

"He opened the door and begged the Colonel to walk in, but when he got to the door, and saw me seated at a table writing, he drew back.

" 'Come in,' the General repeated, 'there is no one here but Major Lewis, and between him and me there are no secrets.'

"The Colonel then came in, and he and the General seated themselves near the fire-place. I had no wish to listen to their conversation, but as the room was small, and they spoke in their usual tone of voice, I could not help hearing every word they said; and as the General did not propose I should leave the room I continued to write on, as I knew he was anxious that the writing upon which I was engaged should be finished in time for that night's mail. After being seated, the Colonel remarked that he saw published in the *Telegraph* of that morning 'a list of the names of the persons that you propose, General, it is said, to bring into your Cabinet.'

"'Yes, sir,' he replied, 'those gentlemen will compose my Cabinet.'

"'There is no objection, I believe, personally, to any of them,' said the Colonel, 'but there is one of them your friends think it would be advisable to substitute with the name of some other person.'

"'Which of the names do you refer to, Colonel?' he inquired.

"'I mean that of Mr. Eaton,' he said.

"'Mr. Eaton is an old personal friend of mine,' the General remarked. 'He is a man of talents and experience, and one in whom his State, as well as myself, have every confidence. I can not see, therefore,' he added, 'why there should be any objection to him.'

"'There is none, I believe, personally to *him*,' the Colonel said, 'but there are great objections made to his wife.'

"'And pray, Colonel, what will his wife have to do with the duties of the War Department?' asked the General.

"'Not much, perhaps,' said the Colonel, 'but she is a person with whom the ladies of this city do not associate. She is not, and, probably, never will be received into society here, and if Mr. Eaton shall be made a member of the Cabinet, it may become a source of annoyance to both you and him.'

"'That may possibly be so,' he said, 'but Colonel, do you suppose that I have been sent here by the people to consult the ladies of Washington as to the proper persons to compose my Cabinet? In the selection of its members I shall consult my own judgment, looking to the great and paramount interests of the whole country, and not to the accommodation of the society and drawing-rooms of this or any other city. Mr. Eaton will certainly be one of my constitutional advisers, unless he declines to become a member of my Cabinet.'

"The Colonel, discovering it would be useless to say any thing more upon the subject, rose, made his bow, and left. But he did not ground his arms at this rebuff of the General. As he could not prevent Mr. Eaton from getting *in*, he seemed resolved, at all hazards, to drive him *out* of the Cabinet, and he therefore continued his opposition to him until it assumed the character of disrespect both to the Secretary of War and the

President. Taking this view of his conduct, the General had made up his mind to have his name struck from the Army Register, and would undoubtedly have done so, if Mr. Eaton had not interposed to prevent it.

“NOTE.—In relating the conversation which took place in the General's bed chamber, between him and Colonel Towson, I do not wish to be understood as intending any disrespect, either to the gallant colonel or the society of Washington, among whom I had many warm and esteemed friends when I lived in that city, as well as at this time, who would be ornaments to any society. In the foregoing narrative, I have been desirous of representing every occurrence correctly, and, I believe, in most instances, I have used the very words spoken, and particularly as relates to General Jackson.

“WM. B. LEWIS.

“NASHVILLE, October 25, 1859.”

To complete our knowledge of this affair, it is necessary to glance for a moment at the correspondence between the President and Vice-President.

As soon as General Jackson had obtained the letter from Mr. Crawford to Governor Forsyth, which declares that it was Calhoun, not Crawford, who had proposed the arrest or punishment of General Jackson in 1818, General Jackson sent that letter to Mr. Calhoun with a brief epistle of his own.

GENERAL JACKSON TO MR. CALHOUN.

“May 13, 1830.

“SIR: The frankness, which, I trust, has always characterized me through life, toward those with whom I have been in the habits of friendship, induces me to lay before you the inclosed copy of a letter from William H. Crawford, Esq., which was placed in my hands on yesterday. The submission, you will perceive, is authorized by the writer. The statements and facts it presents being so different from what I had heretofore understood to be correct, requires that it should be brought to your consideration. They are different from your letter to Governor Bibb, of Alabama, of the 13th May, 1818, where you state, ‘General Jackson is vested with full power to conduct the war in the manner he may judge best,’ and different, too, from your letters to me at that time, which breathe throughout a spirit of approbation and friendship, and particularly the one in which you say, ‘I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 20th ultimo, and to acquaint you with the entire approbation of the President of all the measures you have adopted to terminate the rupture with

the Indians.' My object in making this communication is to announce to you the great surprise which is felt, and to learn of you whether it be possible that the information given is correct; whether it can be, under all the circumstances of which you and I are both informed, that any attempt seriously to affect me was moved and sustained by you in the cabinet council, when, as is known to you, I was but executing the *wishes* of the government, and clothed with the authority to 'conduct the war in the manner I might judge best.'

"You can, if you please, take a copy: the one inclosed you will please return to me. I am, sir, very respectfully, your humble servant,

"ANDREW JACKSON."

Mr. Calhoun was betrayed by his extreme desire to stand well with the President, and to defeat the supposed machinations of his rival, into the weakness of replying to this letter at prodigious length. Instead of taking the proper and dignified ground of declining to reveal the proceedings of a cabinet council, he avowed that, in the belief that General Jackson had transcended his orders in 1818, he *did* express that opinion in the cabinet council, and proposed the investigation of General Jackson's conduct by a court of inquiry. He justified his course, and inveighed against Mr. Crawford for betraying the secret. He reminded General Jackson that the approbatory sentence quoted by him in his letter was written before the news of the seizure of the Spanish ports and of the execution of Arbuthnot and Ambrister had reached Washington. He adduced many proofs of Crawford's hostility to General Jackson and to himself, and denounced this whole proceeding as a plot to effect his own political extinction and the exaltation of his enemies. He declared that his conduct toward General Jackson, from the beginning of their acquaintance, had been that of a true friend and faithful public servant. General Jackson's reply was the following:

GENERAL JACKSON TO MR. CALHOUN.

"May 30th, 1830.

"SIR: Your communication of the 29th instant was handed me this morning just as I was going to church, and of course was not read until I returned.

“ I regret to find that you have entirely mistaken my note of the 13th instant. There is no part of it which calls in question either your conduct or your motives in the case alluded to. Motives are to be inferred from actions, and judged by our God. It had been intimated to me many years ago, that it was you, and not Mr. Crawford, who had been secretly endeavoring to destroy my reputation. These insinuations I indignantly repelled, upon the ground that you, in all your letters to me, professed to be my personal friend, and approved *entirely* my conduct in relation to the Seminole campaign. I had too exalted an opinion of your honor and frankness, to believe for one moment that you could be capable of such deception. Under the influence of these friendly feelings (which I always entertained for you), when I was presented with a copy of Mr. Crawford's letter, with that frankness which ever has, and I hope ever will, characterize my conduct, I considered it due to you, and the friendly relations which had always existed between us, to lay it forthwith before you, and ask if the statements contained in that letter could be true. I repeat, I had a right to believe that you were my sincere friend, and, until now, never expected to have occasion to say of you, in the language of Cæsar, *Et tu Brute?* The evidence which has brought me to this conclusion is abundantly contained in your letter now before me. In your and Mr. Crawford's dispute I have no interest whatever; but it may become necessary for me hereafter, when I shall have more leisure, and the documents at hand, to place the subject in its proper light, to notice the historical facts and references in your communication, which will give a very different view of this subject.

“ It is due to myself, however, to state that the knowledge of the executive documents and orders in my possession will show conclusively that I had authority for all I did, and that your explanation of my powers, as declared to Governor Bibb, shows your own understanding of them. Your letter to me of the 29th, handed to-day, and now before me, is the first intimation to me that *you* ever entertained any opinion or view of them. Your conduct, words, actions, and letters, I have ever thought, show this. Understanding you now, no further communication with you on this subject is necessary. I have the honor to be, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

ANDREW JACKSON.”

Mr. Calhoun persisted in continuing the correspondence. He added, however, nothing of importance to what he had stated in his first communication, and General Jackson again declared that he desired to hear no more upon the subject. He gave Mr. Calhoun plainly to understand that friendly relations between them were for ever out of the question.



In reviewing this affair, at once so trivial and so important, I find no evidence whatever that Mr. Calhoun was guilty of duplicity toward General Jackson. Not only was he not bound to communicate to General Jackson the transactions of the Cabinet council, but he was bound *not* to reveal them. Nor does it appear that he ever professed, publicly or privately, to General Jackson or to any one else, that he approved *all* of the General's proceedings in Florida. Nor was it any just cause of reproach that he did not approve those proceedings. He admitted and believed that General Jackson's motives had been patriotic, and if he disapproved some of his acts, the General had no right to make that disapproval a ground of offense. Mr. Calhoun's only fault in this business was in his deigning to make any reply to the General's first letter, except civilly to decline giving the information sought. He should have taken high ground at first, and kept it. He should have disdained to fight Mr. Crawford with his own weapons, and not followed his bad example of revealing Cabinet secrets. If he had done so, General Jackson might have hated him, but could never have despised him. A manly defiance General Jackson liked next to complete submission.

The truth is, that before this affair began, the President was, in his heart, totally estranged from Mr. Calhoun, and would have been glad of any pretext for breaking with him.

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## CHAPTER XXVI.

THE "GLOBE" ESTABLISHED.

THE feud between the President and the Vice-President, which was not known to the public for nearly a year after their correspondence closed, began to produce serious effects almost immediately. Among those who most lamented the estrangement, and had most reason to lament it, was General

Duff Green, editor of the *United States Telegraph*, and printer to Congress. "We endeavored," he said afterward, in his paper, "to postpone the crisis by direct appeals to the President and to Mr. Calhoun. We refused to read the correspondence between them, because we had hoped, although almost against hope, even up to the last moment, that the eyes of the President would be opened, and that a reconciliation would take place. When the question came in this shape there was less difficulty. It was not a desertion of our friends or of our principles. We were compelled to choose, and we took the weaker side ; not because we preferred Mr. Calhoun, but because his was the side of truth and honor."

There is reason to believe that the inner circle of Jacksonians were, in some degree, dissatisfied with the organ of the administration before the quarrel between General Jackson and Mr. Calhoun occurred. The destruction of the Bank of the United States being one of their fixed and most cherished purposes, they must have desired an organ that could be relied upon to aid them in the long contest which they saw impending. Mr. Kendall, in fact, in one of his letters to Duff Green, in 1830, held this language : "Had I been rejected by the Senate, I should at once have started a newspaper in Washington. It appeared to be the readiest way by which I could provide the means of comfort for a destitute family, and vindicate the principles of equal rights, violated in the proscription of printers as a class. Besides, I had some ambition to promote, at this point, the great cause of reform."

Mr. Kendall, however, was not rejected by the Senate, and the *Telegraph* remained the sole organ of the party at the seat of government.

Soon after the difference between the first officers of the government was known by their friends to be irreconcilable, the *Telegraph* began, gradually and cautiously, to change its tone. For a considerable time General Jackson would not perceive the change, for he was attached to the paper and to its editor, and had many agreeable recollections connected

with both. The *Telegraph* had supported him, both before and after his election, with that daring unscrupulousness which was congenial with the feelings of this man of war. Mr. Kendall, however, and Major Lewis saw the coming defection of General Green very plainly, and advised the President to provide in time for the establishment of another organ.

"No," said the General, "you are mistaken. Give Duff time. He will come out right after a little reflection."

Major Lewis felt so confident of the correctness of his surmises that he wrote confidentially, and without consulting the President, to Mr. Gooch, of the *Richmond Inquirer*, asking him if he would come to Washington and establish an organ, in case the President should, at any future time, desire it. Mr. Gooch declined. Mr. Kendall had his eye upon another gentleman, his old friend and voluntary contributor, Francis P. Blair, of Kentucky.

Col. Benton, in his "Thirty Years' View," gives a striking, but not quite correct account of the manner in which the President procured the services of Mr. Blair. "In the summer of 1830," says Col. Benton, "a gentleman in one of the public offices showed the President a paper, the *Frankfort* (Kentucky) *Argus*, containing a powerful and spirited review of a certain nullification speech in Congress. He inquired for the author, ascertained him to be Mr. Francis P. Blair—not the editor, but an occasional contributor to the *Argus*—and had him written to on the subject of taking charge of a paper in Washington. The application took Mr. Blair by surprise. He was not thinking of changing his residence and pursuits. He was well occupied where he was—clerk of the lucrative office of the State Circuit Court at the capital of the State, salaried president of the Commonwealth Bank (by the election of the legislature), and proprietor of a farm and slaves in that rich State."

It is true that General Jackson was struck with the article referred to by Col. Benton; but it was only after much subsequent persuasion and repeated proofs of Duff

Green's defection that the President gave a reluctant consent that Mr. Blair should be summoned to the rescue. Nor was Mr. Blair in the pleasant pecuniary circumstances detailed by Col. Benton. He was a man of broken fortune, forty thousand dollars in debt, living upon the slender emoluments of his two offices. It is surprising that the author of the "Thirty Years' View" should have been unacquainted with facts which Mr. Blair often amuses his friends by relating.

If the country had been searched for the express purpose of selecting the man best fitted for the editorship of the proposed organ, no one could have been found whose history, opinions, antipathies, and cast of character so adapted him for the post as Francis P. Blair, of Kentucky. Descended from the Scotch family of whom the famous Hugh Blair was a member, born in Virginia, reared and educated in Kentucky, he had been from his youth up an ardent but disinterested politician. For ten years he had taken part in the discussion of the question whether the branches of the bank of the United States were, or were not, subject to State taxation, a question that was nowhere argued with such heat and pertinacity as in Kentucky. Mr. Blair was against the bank. The ten years' agitation had made him acquainted with all the vulnerable points of the institution, and familiar with the weapons of attack. He was among the most decided opponents of the bank in the Union. Another of his special antipathies was nullification ; and yet another was John Quincy Adams and the high federalism of his messages. Master of an easy and vigorous style, which could become slashing and fierce upon occasion, his whole training as a writer and a politician had been belligerent. He was only a warrior upon paper, however. In person slender and unimposing, in demeanor retiring and quiet, in character amiable, affectionate, and grateful, the man and the editor were two beings as dissimilar as can be imagined. Jackson men who called at the office of the *Globe*, expecting to find the thunderer of their party a man of Kentuckian proportions, with pistols peeping from

his breast-pocket, and a bowie-knife stiffening his back, were amazed upon being told that the little man sitting in a corner, writing on his knee, was the great editor they had come to get a sight of.

The summons to Washington, though unexpected, Mr. Blair obeyed without hesitation and without delay. He reached the capital in sorry plight ; almost penniless, with a single presentable coat, and that a frock-coat ; with a great gash in the side of his head from an upset near Washington. When he entered the President's office, Major Lewis could hardly conceal his disappointment. For weeks, Mr. Blair had been the coming man to all the *habitués* of that apartment. Whenever General Duff had ventured to come out a little bolder than usual against the administration or its friends, they had said to one another, in effect, "Never mind. Wait till Blair comes. *He* will talk to him." And this was he—this little man attired in frock-coat and court-plaster ! Said Major Lewis, with a sly glance at the black patch, "Mr. Blair, we want stout hearts and sound heads here."

The General took to him at once, and he to the General. At the very first interview, the President revealed to him the situation of affairs without any reserve whatever. The difficulties he had had in his own household, the alleged machinations of the nullifiers, the supposed atrocities of the bank, the imaginary devices of that arch-devil, Henry Clay, the cabinet combination against poor Major Eaton—all were unfolded. "There's my nephew, Donelson," said the General ; "he seems to be leaning toward the nullifiers. But he's my nephew. I raised him. I love him. Let him do what he will, I love him. I can't help it. Treat him kindly, but if he wants to write for your paper, you must look out for him." The President invited Mr. Blair to dinner. When the hour came, the editor was horrified to find a great company of ambassadors and other high personages assembled in the East Room, all in costume superb. The tails of his uncomfortable frock coat hung heavily upon the soul of the

stranger, who shrunk into a corner abashed and miserable. The President, as soon as he entered the room, sought him out, placed him at the table in the seat of honor at his own right hand, and completed the conquest of his heart. In Francis P. Blair, General Jackson gained a lover as well as a champion.

Like Jonah's gourd, the *Globe* appeared to spring into existence in a night—without capital, without a press, without types, without subscribers, without advertisements. Amos Kendall made a contract for the printing. Major Lewis, Mr. Kendall, and all the confidants of the administration exerted themselves to obtain subscribers. The office-holders were given to understand that to subscribe for the *Globe* was the thing they were expected to do, and the Jackson presses throughout the country, announced that the *Globe* was, and the *Telegraph* was not, the confidential organ of the administration. Subscribers came in by hundreds in a day, and the *Globe* became a paying enterprise in a few weeks. Partly by subscription, and partly by papers paid for in advance, a press and materials were soon purchased. A known friend of the bank advanced two hundred dollars for this purpose. The next morning, Mr. Blair, having in the meantime learned the probable object of this donation, returned the money.

To swell the profits of the *Globe* office, the President desired to obtain for it the printing of the departments, or, at least, a share of that profitable business. As some of the secretaries showed no alacrity to make the transfer desired, the fertile brain of Major Lewis devised a very simple but quite effectual expedient for compelling them to do so. He induced the President to issue an order to each member of the cabinet, requiring him to present to the President a quarterly account of the sums paid, and to whom paid, in his department for printing. Major Lewis drew up the order. Major Donelson, as usual, copied it. The President signed it. Such an order, in the peculiar posture of affairs at the time, was equivalent to a command to give the *Globe* office a share of the department printing; and the command was obeyed.

In due time, came the election of Messrs. Blair and Rives as printers to Congress, which added fortune to the fame and power given them by the *Globe*. Mr. John C. Rives, the well-known partner of Mr. Blair, was a gentleman who added to respectable literary attainments an extraordinary efficiency in the management of business.

The *Telegraph* waged an active warfare against General Jackson for several years, supporting Henry Clay for the presidency in 1832, with hopes for Mr. Calhoun in 1836 or 1840. The campaign of 1832 gave it a temporary inflation, which the result of that campaign changed into partial collapse. The editor still lives in Washington, a prosperous gentleman, delighting to tell over, to after-dinner circles, the story of his short and turbulent career as Jacksonian organ.

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## CHAPTER XXVII.

### CONGRESS IN SESSION.

THE administration of General Jackson, however distracted by internal broils, whatever motives of a partisan or personal character influenced it, always came before the public with an imposing air of calm dignity and single-eyed patriotism. No one could ever suppose, from its public papers, that, from the beginning to the end of its existence, it scarcely knew a month of internal peace and real coöperative harmony.

Congress met again on the 6th of December, and on the day following Major Donelson was at the Capitol with the message, one of the most carefully elaborated documents ever presented to Congress.

It opened with jubilation. Plenty and peace had crowned the year. "With a population unparalleled in its increase, and possessing a character which combines the hardihood of

enterprise with the considerateness of wisdom," every where was seen a steady improvement. A glowing paragraph expressed the congratulations of the nation upon the success of the late revolution in France, which had enabled Lafayette to place upon the throne the prince Louis Philippe, a man who, the President hoped, would deserve the proud appellation of PATRIOT KING. The recent diplomatic triumph of Mr. McLane, which placed our trade with the West Indies on its present footing, after six previous negotiations had resulted in failure, was explained, and the negotiators on both sides duly complimented, Mr. McLane being mentioned by name. The Sultan had opened to us the Black Sea, and placed our commerce, in all respects, on the footing of the most favored nations. With Mexico, Russia, France, Spain, Portugal, negotiations were pending with every prospect of issues advantageous to the United States. Denmark had at length appropriated the sum of six hundred and fifty thousand dollars, the whole amount claimed, to indemnify American merchants for the spoliations of 1808 to 1811, and it now only remained for Congress to effect a just distribution of the money among the claimants.

These administrative triumphs having been detailed, the authors of the message grappled with the serious business of the occasion, which was to defend the course of the President in his veto of the Maysville road, and in his withholding his assent from the light-house bill, and the bill authorizing a subscription to the Louisville and Portland Canal Company, both of which had been passed at the close of the last session of Congress. That the expense of constructing light-houses properly devolved upon the general government, the President did not doubt; but there were some features of the light-house bill in question of which he could not approve. To the number of light-house keepers, already very large, the bill proposed to add the extraordinary number of fifty-one. The expenditures of the government for the protection of commerce were immense, and, as he had been led to conclude, unreasonable, and he looked rather to their diminution than



their increase. Moreover, the present bill contained the entirely fatal objection of authorizing certain surveys which were clearly of a local character, and designed for the promotion of local interests.

With regard to the bill proposing a subscription of the public money to the stock of a private company, he was utterly and for ever opposed to that mode of assisting public works. He thought it unconstitutional, impolitic, injurious, and demoralizing. With his consent it should never be done.

The message proceeded to vindicate the Maysville veto, the use of the veto power generally, and the proposed apportionment of the surplus revenue among the States. Amid all the clamor and controversy to which his measures had given rise, the President said he had been consoled by the reflection that if he had really mistaken the interests and wishes of the people, an opportunity would soon be afforded them of placing in the presidential chair one who would interpret their desires more correctly. Meanwhile, the money saved by the vetos would be rigidly applied to the extinguishment of the public debt.

The President repeated his recommendations for the removal of "all intermediate agency" in the election of the chief magistrate, and for limiting his period of service to one term.

He artfully defended the policy of removing the Indians, denying that the removal was either unjust or inhuman. "Doubtless," he remarked, "it will be painful to leave the graves of their fathers; but what do they more than our ancestors did, or than our children are now doing? To better their condition in an unknown land, our forefathers left all that was dear in earthly objects. Our children, by thousands, yearly leave the land of their birth, to seek new homes in distant regions."

The tariff was a topic, of course, and it was touched with an uncertain hand, of course. The people were implored not to regard the tariff as a sectional matter, and to ap-

proach it in a spirit of conciliation. The revenue of the year had been \$24,161,018; the expenditures, exclusive of the public debt, \$13,742,311; the payment on account of the public debt had been \$11,354,630; balance in the treasury, \$4,819,781.

The message concluded with a second and louder warning to the United States bank. "Nothing has occurred," said the President, "to lessen, in any degree, the dangers which many of our citizens apprehend from that institution, as at present organized. In the spirit of improvement and compromise which distinguishes our country and its institutions, it becomes us to inquire, whether it be not possible to secure the advantages afforded by the present bank, through the agency of a bank of the United States, so modified in its principles and structure as to obviate constitutional and other objections. It is thought practicable to organize such a bank, with the necessary officers, as a branch of the Treasury Department, based on the public and individual deposits, without power to make loans or purchase property, which shall remit the funds of the government, and the expense of which may be paid, if thought advisable, by allowing its officers to sell bills of exchange to private individuals at a moderate premium. Not being a corporate body, having no stockholders, debtors, or property, and but few officers, it would not be obnoxious to the constitutional objections which are urged against the present bank; and having no means to operate on the hopes, fears, or interests of large masses of the community, it would be shorn of the influence which makes that bank formidable."

This message was one of the longest ever presented to Congress. The care and elaboration of the argumentative portions of it show how deeply its leading topics were agitating the public mind, and how resolutely the administration was marching toward the objects it had prescribed to itself.

One event only of this session of Congress need detain us—Colonel Benton's first formal attack upon the Bank of the

United States. "The current," says the author of the "Thirty Years' View," "was all setting one way. I determined to raise a voice against it in the Senate, and made several efforts before I succeeded—the thick array of the Bank friends throwing every obstacle in my way, and even friends holding me back for the regular course, which was to wait until the application for the renewed charter should be presented ; and then to oppose it. I foresaw that, if this course was followed, the Bank would triumph without a contest—that she would wait until a majority was installed in both Houses of Congress—then present her application—hear a few barren speeches in opposition ;—and then gallop the renewed charter through."

The speech of Mr. Benton, on this occasion, was one of the ablest and most effective of his whole senatorial career of thirty years. It emptied the Senate chamber, but it roused the people. We shall have, in a future page, to give the substance of his arguments against the Bank, and, therefore, pass over this truly Bentonian fulmination.

"This speech," continues Colonel Benton, "was not answered. Confident in its strength, and insolent in its nature, the great moneyed power had adopted a system in which she persevered until hard knocks drove her out of it : it was to have an anti-Bank speech treated with the contempt of silence in the House, and caricatured and belittled in the newspapers ; and according to this system my speech was treated. The instant it was delivered, Mr. Webster called for the vote, and to be taken by yeas and nays, which was done ; and resulted differently from what was expected—a strong vote against the Bank—twenty to twenty-three ; enough to excite uneasiness, but not enough to pass the resolution and legitimate a debate on the subject. The debate stopped with the single speech ; but it was a speech to be read by the people—the masses—the millions ; and was conceived and delivered for that purpose ; and was read by them ; and has been complimented since as having crippled the Bank, and given it the wound of which it afterward died ; but not within the year

and a day which would make the slayer responsible for the homicide. The list of yeas and nays was also favorable to the effect of the speech. Though not a party vote, it was sufficiently so to show how it stood—the mass of the democracy against the Bank—the mass of the anti-democrats for it.”

This being the “short session,” Congress adjourned on the third of March, when the Twenty-first Congress ceased to exist.

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## CHAPTER XXVIII.

### DISSOLUTION OF THE CABINET.

TOWARD the close of this brief and uneventful session of Congress, Mr. Calhoun published his “Book,” as it was sneeringly called at the time; a pamphlet of fifty pages octavo, containing his late correspondence with the President, and a mass of letters, statements, and certificates illustrative thereof. In a prefatory address to the people of the United States, Mr. Calhoun explained his reasons for making a publication so unusual and unexpected.

“Previous to my arrival at Washington” (in December, 1830), said he, “I had confined the knowledge of the existence of the correspondence to a few confidential friends, who were politically attached both to General Jackson and myself; not that I had any thing to apprehend from its disclosure, but because I was unwilling to increase the existing excitement in the present highly critical state of our public affairs. But when I arrived here, late in December, I found my caution had been of no avail, and that the correspondence was a subject of conversation in every circle, and soon became a topic of free comment in most of the public journals. The accounts of the affair, as is usually the case on such occasions, were, for the most part, grossly distorted, and were, in many instances, highly injurious to my character. Still I

deemed it my duty to take no hasty step, being determined to afford time for justice to be done me without appeal to you ; and, if it should be, to remain silent, as my only object was the vindication of my conduct and character. Believing that further delay would be useless, I can see no adequate motive to postpone, any longer, the submission of all the facts of the case to your deliberate and final decision."

The pamphlet was discussed in a strictly partisan spirit ; all the Jackson papers condemning it, all the opposition papers applauding it. A few weeks after its appearance, the *New York Courier and Enquirer* gave extracts from nearly two hundred democratic papers, vindicating the President and condemning the course of Mr. Calhoun. "Every republican paper in the Middle and Northern States," said the *Courier*, "friendly to Andrew Jackson's reelection, has unequivocally condemned the publication made by Mr. Calhoun of his attack on the President. In the South, out of South Carolina, it is nearly the same ; and even in South Carolina, a strong party is forming against him, and in favor of Jackson."

"Mr. Calhoun's *attack* on the President !" "Condemns unequivocally Mr. Calhoun *and* the nullifiers !" Artful conjunction ! Were the politicians far astray when they said, that "General Jackson's popularity could stand any thing?"

The President's retort was prompt, adroit, audacious, and overwhelming. By a series of skillful movements, he shelved the three members of his cabinet—Messrs. Ingham, Branch, and Berrien—who were Mr. Calhoun's friends and political allies. This was done about a month after the adjournment of Congress, and the moment was admirably chosen. It was long enough after the publication of Mr. Calhoun's pamphlet for it to have been well ridiculed in the administration papers, and to have ceased to be an exciting topic. It was in the lull preceding the excitement of the coming presidential election. It was nine months before there could be any trouble with the Senate respecting confirmations. Indeed, we may truly say of this disruption of the cabinet in 1831.

that of all known political management it was the consummate stroke. Jacksonian boldness united with Van Buren tact could alone have achieved it.

A dissolution of the cabinet was the expedient hit upon. Mr. Van Buren and Major Eaton were to resign and to be provided for. Mr. Barry, the Postmaster-General, should retain his place awhile. The obnoxious Three were expected to take a hint and leave ; if not, the President was prepared to ask their resignations. Go they should.

Every thing was considered, and, as far as possible, provided for before the first step was taken. Mr. Edward Livingston, Senator from Louisiana, was notified of coming events, and offered the post of Secretary of State, which he agreed to accept. He had recently paid off, principal and interest, the sum due from him to the government, on account of the misconduct of his clerks in 1803. Thus, a possible objection to his appointment was removed. Mr. Louis McLane, Minister to England, was recalled ; which provided a place for Mr. Van Buren and a new Secretary of the Treasury for General Jackson. Judge Hugh L. White, Senator from Tennessee, was the gentleman designed to fill the place about to be vacated by Major Eaton. If Judge White accepted, of which there was then no doubt, there would be a vacant seat in the Senate for Major Eaton, to which, it was thought, he could be appointed. Mr. Levi Woodbury was ready to take the place of Secretary of the Navy.

By the bold and artful measures contemplated a great many desirable objects were expected to be gained. A united cabinet, devoted to General Jackson and to the furtherance of his schemes, was one object. The removal of Mr. Van Buren from the scene of strife to a safe and commanding position abroad was thought to be a proceeding well calculated to promote his interests. Moreover, the President had made known to many persons, at the beginning of his administration, his resolve that no member of his cabinet should be his successor. A minor object was, to retrieve the unhappy

Eaton from his painfully embarrassing situation, and restore him to the place he preferred, a seat in the Senate.

The following is the correspondence between the President and the members of the Cabinet relative to the resignations. The reader will observe the dates :

MR. EATON TO THE PRESIDENT.

“ WASHINGTON CITY, April 7, 1831.

“ DEAR SIR : Four days ago I communicated to you my desire to relinquish the duties of the War Department, and I now take occasion to repeat the request which was then made. I am not disposed, by any sudden withdrawal, to interrupt or retard the business of the office. A short time will be sufficient, I hope, to enable you to direct your attention toward some person in whose capacity, industry, and friendly disposition you may have confidence, to assist in the complicated and laborious duties of your administration. Two or three weeks—perhaps less—may be sufficient for the purpose.

“ In coming to this conclusion, candor demands of me to say, that it arises from no dissatisfaction entertained toward you—from no misunderstanding between us, on any subject ; nor from any diminution, on my part, of that friendship and confidence which has ever been reposed in you.

“ I entered your Cabinet, as is well known to you, contrary to my own wishes ; and having nothing to desire, either as it regards myself or friends, have ever since cherished a determination to avail myself of the first favorable moment, after your administration should be in successful operation, to retire. It occurs to me that the time is now at hand when I may do so with propriety. Looking to the present state of things—to the course of your administration, which, being fairly developed, is before the people for approval or condemnation, I can not consider the step I am taking objectionable, or that it is one the tendency of which can be to affect or injure a course of policy by you already advantageously commenced, and which I hope will be carried out to the benefit and advancement of the people.

“ Tendering my sincere wishes for your prosperity and happiness, and for your successful efforts in the cause of your country, I am, very truly, your friend,

“ J. H. EATON.

“ To ANDREW JACKSON, President of the United States.”

THE PRESIDENT TO MR. EATON.

“ WASHINGTON CITY, April 8, 1831.

“ DEAR SIR : Your letter of yesterday was received, and I have carefully considered it. When you conversed with me the other day on the

subject of your withdrawing from the Cabinet, I expressed to you a sincere desire that you would well consider of it; for however reluctant I am to be deprived of your services, I can not consent to retain you contrary to your wishes and inclination to remain, particularly as I well know that in 1829, when I invited you to become a member of my Cabinet, you objected and expressed a desire to be excused, and only gave up your objections at my pressing solicitation.

"An acquaintance with you of twenty years' standing, assured me that in your honesty, prudence, capacity, discretion, and judgment, I could safely rely and confide. I have not been disappointed. With the performance of your duties, since you have been with me, I have been fully satisfied, and, go where you will, be your destiny what it may, my best wishes will always attend you.

"I will avail myself of the earliest opportunity to obtain some qualified friend to succeed you; and until then, I must solicit that the acceptance of your resignation be deferred. I am, very sincerely and respectfully, your friend,

"ANDREW JACKSON.

"Major J. H. EATON, Secretary of War."

MR. VAN BUREN TO THE PRESIDENT.

"WASHINGTON, April 11, 1831.

"DEAR SIR: I feel it to be my duty to retire from the office to which your confidence and partiality called me. The delicacy of this step, under the circumstances in which it is taken, will, I trust, be deemed an ample apology for stating more at large than might otherwise have been necessary, the reasons by which I am influenced.

"From the moment of taking my seat in your Cabinet, it has been my anxious wish and zealous endeavor to prevent a premature agitation of the question of your successor, and, at all events to discountenance and, if possible, repress the disposition, at an early day manifested, to connect my name with that disturbing topic. Of the sincerity and constancy of this disposition, no one has had a better opportunity to judge than yourself. It has, however, been unavailing. Circumstances not of my creation, and altogether beyond my control, have given to this subject a turn which can not now be remedied, except by a self-disfranchisement which, even if dictated by my individual wishes, could hardly be reconcilable with propriety or self-respect.

"Concerning the injurious effects which the circumstance of a member of the Cabinet's occupying the relation toward the country to which I have adverted, is calculated to have upon the conduct of public affairs, there can not, I think, at this time, be room for two opinions. Diversities of ulterior preference among the friends of an administration are unavoidable, and even if the respective advocates of those thus placed in rivalry be



patriotic enough to resist the temptation of creating obstacles to the advancement of him to whose elevation they are opposed, by embarrassing the branch of public service committed to his charge, they are, nevertheless, by their position, exposed to the suspicion of entertaining and encouraging such views—a suspicion which can seldom fail, in the end, to aggravate into present alienation and hostility the prospective differences which first gave rise to it. Thus, under the least unfavorable consequences, individual injustice is suffered, and the administration embarrassed and weakened.

“Whatever may have been the course of things under the peculiar circumstances of the earlier stage of the republic, my experience has fully satisfied me that at this day, when the field of selection has become so extended, the circumstance referred to, by augmenting the motives and sources of opposition to the measures of the Executive, must unavoidably prove the cause of injury to the public service, for a counterpoise to which we may in vain look to the peculiar qualifications of any individual; and even if I should in this be mistaken, still I can not so far deceive myself as to believe for a moment that I am included in the exceptions.

“These obstructions to the successful prosecution of public affairs, when superadded to that opposition which is inseparable from our free institutions, and which every administration must expect, present a mass to which the operations of the government should at no time be voluntarily exposed. The more especially should this be avoided at so eventful a period in the affairs of the world, when our country may particularly need the utmost harmony in her councils.

“Such being my impressions, the path of duty is plain, and I not only submit with cheerfulness to whatever personal sacrifices may be involved in the surrender of the station I occupy, but I make it my ambition to set an example which, should it in the progress of the government be deemed, notwithstanding the humility of its origin, worthy of respect and observance, can not, I think, fail to prove essentially and permanently beneficial.

“Allow me, sir, to present one more view of the subject. You have consented to stand before your constituents for reëlection. Of their decision, resting as it does upon the unbought suffrages of a free, numerous, and widely-extended people, it becomes no man to speak with certainty. Judging, however, from the past, and making a reasonable allowance for the fair exercise of the intelligence and public spirit of your fellow-citizens, I can not hesitate in adopting the belief that the confidence, as well in your capacity for civil duties as in your civic virtues, already so spontaneously and strikingly displayed, will be manifested with increased energy, now that all candid observers must admit their utmost expectations to have been more than realized.

"If this promise, so auspicious to the best interests of our common country, be fulfilled, the concluding term of your administration will, in the absence of any prominent cause of discord among its supporters, afford a most favorable opportunity for the full accomplishment of those important public objects, in the prosecution of which I have witnessed on your part such steady vigilance and untiring devotion. To the unfavorable influence which my continuance in your Cabinet, under existing circumstances, may exercise upon this flattering prospect, I can not, sir, without a total disregard of the lights of experience, and without shutting my eyes to the obvious tendency of things for the future, be insensible. Having, moreover, from a deep conviction of its importance to the country, been among the most urgent of your advisers to yield yourself to the obvious wishes of the people, and knowing the sacrifice of personal feeling which was involved in your acquiescence, I can not reconcile it to myself to be in any degree the cause of embarrassment to you during the period which, as it certainly will be of deep interest to your country, is moreover destined to bring to its close, your patriotic, toilsome, and eventful public life.

"From these considerations I feel it to be doubly my duty to resign a post the retention of which is so calculated to attract assaults upon your administration, to which there might otherwise be no inducement—assaults of which, whatever be their aim, the most important as well as most injurious effect is upon those public interests which deserve and should command the support of all good citizens. This duty I should have discharged at an earlier period, but for considerations, partly of a public, partly of a personal nature, connected with circumstances which were calculated to expose its performance then to misconstruction and misrepresentation.

"Having explained the motives which govern me in thus severing, and with seeming abruptness, the official ties by which we have been associated, there remains but one duty for me to perform. It is to make my profound and sincere acknowledgments for that steady support and cheering confidence which, in the discharge of my duties, I have, under all circumstances, received at your hands: as well as for the personal kindness at all times extended to me.

"Rest assured, sir, that the success of your administration, and the happiness of your private life, will ever constitute objects of the deepest solicitude with your sincere friend and obedient servant,

"M. VAN BUREN.

"The President."

THE PRESIDENT TO MR. VAN BUREN.

"WASHINGTON, April 12, 1831.

"DEAR SIR: Your letter resigning the office of Secretary of State was received last evening. I could indeed wish that no circumstance had arisen

to interrupt the relations which have, for two years, subsisted between us, and that they might have continued through the period during which it may be my lot to remain charged with the duties which the partiality of my countrymen has imposed upon me. But the reasons you present are so strong that, with a proper regard for them, I can not ask you, on my own account, to remain in the Cabinet.

“ I am aware of the difficulties you have had to contend with, and of the benefits which have resulted to the affairs of your country, from your continued zeal in the arduous tasks to which you have been subjected. To say that I deeply regret to lose you, is but feebly to express my feelings on the occasion.

“ When called by my country to the station which I occupy, it was not without a deep sense of its arduous responsibilities, and a strong distrust of myself, that I obeyed the call; but cheered by the consciousness that no other motive actuated me than a desire to guard her interests, and to place her upon the firm ground of those great principles which, by the wisest and purest of our patriots, have been deemed essential to her prosperity, I ventured upon the trust assigned me. I did this in the confident hope of finding the support of advisers able and true; who, laying aside every thing but a desire to give new vigor to the vital principles of our Union, would look with a single eye to the best means of effecting this paramount object. In you, this hope has been realized to the utmost. In the most difficult and trying moments of my administration, I have always found you sincere, able, and efficient—anxious at all times to afford me every aid.

“ If, however, from circumstances in your judgment sufficient to make it necessary, the official ties subsisting between us must be severed, I can only say that this necessity is deeply lamented by me. I part with you only because you yourself have requested me to do so, and have sustained that request by reasons strong enough to command my assent. I can not, however, allow the separation to take place, without expressing the hope, that this retirement from public affairs is but temporary; and that if in any other station the government should have occasion for your services, the value of which has been so sensibly felt by me, your consent will not be wanting.

“ Of the state of things to which you advert, I can not but be fully aware. I look upon it with sorrow, and regret the more, because one of its first effects is to disturb the harmony of my Cabinet. It is, however, but an instance of one of the evils to which free governments must ever be liable. The only remedy for these evils, as they arise, lies in the intelligence and public spirit of our common constituents. They will correct them—and in this there is abundant consolation. I can not quit this subject without adding that, with the best opportunities for observing and judging, I have seen in you no other desire than to move quietly on in the

path of your duties, and to promote the harmonious conduct of public affairs. If, on this point, you have had to encounter detraction, it is but another proof of the utter insufficiency of innocence and worth to shield from such assaults.

"Be assured that the interest you express in my happiness is most heartily reciprocated—that my most cordial feelings accompany you, and that I am, very sincerely, your friend,

"ANDREW JACKSON.

"P. S. It is understood that you are to continue in your office until your successor is appointed.

"MARTIN VAN BUREN, Secretary of State."

MR. INGHAM TO THE PRESIDENT.

"WASHINGTON, April 18, 1831.

"SIR: In communicating to me, this morning, the information of the resignations of the Secretary of State and Secretary of War, together with the reasons which had induced the former to take this step, you were pleased to observe that this proceeding was made known to me as one of those whom you had associated with you in the administration of the government, and you suggested that I would, after a few days' reflection, have a further conversation with you on this subject. But, in recurring to the brief remarks made at the time, as well as to the letter of resignation of the Secretary of State, which you were good enough to submit for my perusal, I have not been able to ascertain what particular matter was intended to be proposed for my reflection, as connected with this event. Under these circumstances, and being desirous of avoiding the possibility of misapprehension as to your views, I would respectfully inquire whether the measure adopted by the Secretaries of State and of War, is deemed to involve considerations on which you expect a particular communication from me, and, if so, of what nature.

"I have the honor to be, respectfully, your obedient servant,

"S. D. INGHAM.

"To the President of the United States."

MR. INGHAM TO THE PRESIDENT.

"WASHINGTON, April 19, 1831.

"SIR: I am gratified to find myself entirely relieved, by the distinct explanations at the interview to which you invited me to-day, from the uncertainty as to the object of your communication yesterday, which I had referred to in my note of last evening; and have to make my acknowledgments for the kindness with which you have expressed your satisfaction with the manner in which I have discharged the duties of the station to which you had thought proper to invite me, and your conviction of the public confidence in my administration of the Treasury Department. I beg

leave, however, to add, in my own justification, for not following the example of the Secretary of State and Secretary of War, in making a voluntary tender of the resignation of my office, as soon as I was acquainted with theirs, that I was wholly unconscious of the application, to myself, of any of the reasons, so far as I was apprised of them, which had induced them to withdraw from the public service. It, therefore, seemed to be due to my own character, which might otherwise have been exposed to unfavorable imputations, that I should find a reason for resigning, in a distinct expression of your wish to that effect; this wish has now been frankly announced, and has enabled me to place my retirement on its true ground.

"I have, therefore, the honor of tendering to you my resignation of the office of Secretary of the Treasury of the United States, which you will be pleased to accept, to take effect as soon as my services may be dispensed with consistently with your views of the public interest.

"I seize the occasion to offer you my thanks for the many testimonials I have received of your kindness and confidence during our official connection, and especially for the renewed assurance, this day, of the same sentiment.

"S. D. INGHAM.

"His Excellency, ANDREW JACKSON, President of the United States."

#### THE PRESIDENT TO MR. INGHAM.

"WASHINGTON, April 20, 1831.

"SIR: Late last evening I had the honor to receive your letter of that date, tendering your resignation of the office of Secretary of the Treasury. When the resignations of the Secretary of State and Secretary of War were tendered, I considered fully the reasons offered, and all the circumstances connected with the subject. After mature deliberation, I concluded to accept those resignations. But when this conclusion was come to, it was accompanied with a conviction that I must entirely renew my Cabinet. Its members had been invited by me to the stations they occupied; it had come together in great harmony, and as a unit. Under the circumstances in which I found myself, I could not but perceive the propriety of selecting a Cabinet composed of entirely new materials, as being calculated, in this respect at least, to command public confidence and satisfy public opinion. Neither could I be insensible to the fact, that to permit two only to retire, would be to afford room for unjust misconceptions and malignant misrepresentations concerning the influence of their particular presence upon the conduct of public affairs. Justice to the individuals whose public spirit had impelled them to tender their resignations, also required, then, in my opinion, the decision which I have stated. However painful to my own feelings, it became necessary that I should frankly make known to you the whole subject.

"In accepting of your resignation, it is with great pleasure that I bear

testimony to the integrity and zeal with which you have managed the fiscal concerns of the nation. In your discharge of all the duties of your office, over which I have any control, I have been fully satisfied; and in your retirement you carry with you my best wishes for your prosperity and happiness.

"It is expected that you will continue to discharge the duties of your office until a successor is appointed.

"I have the honor to be, with great respect, your most obedient servant,  
"ANDREW JACKSON.

"SAMUEL D. INGHAM, Secretary of the Treasury."

#### MR. BRANCH TO THE PRESIDENT.

"WASHINGTON, April 19th, 1831.

"SIR: In the interview which I had the honor to hold with you this morning, I understood it to be your fixed purpose to reorganize your cabinet, and that as to myself it was your wish that I should retire from the administration of the Navy Department.

"Under these circumstances, I take pleasure in tendering to you the commission, which, unsolicited on my part, you were pleased to confer on me.

"I have the honor to be, with great respect, yours, etc.,

"JOHN BRANCH.

"To the President of the United States."

#### THE PRESIDENT TO MR. BRANCH.

"WASHINGTON, April 19th, 1831.

"SIR: Your letter of this date, by your son, is just received—accompanying it is your commission. The sending of the latter was not necessary; it is your own private property, and by no means to be considered part of the archives of the government. Accordingly I return it.

"There is one expression in your letter to which I take leave to except. I did not, as to *yourself*, express a wish that you should retire. The Secretaries of State and of War having tendered their resignations, I remarked to you that I felt it to be indispensable to reorganize my cabinet proper; that it had come in harmoniously, and as a unit; and as a part was about to leave me, which on to-morrow would be announced, a reorganization was necessary to guard against misrepresentation. These were my remarks, made to you in candor and sincerity. Your letter gives a different import to my words.

"Your letter contains no remarks as to your performing the duties of the office until a successor can be selected. On this subject I should be glad to know your views. I am, very respectfully, yours,

"ANDREW JACKSON.

"The Hon. JOHN BRANCH, Secretary of the Navy."

## MR. BRANCH TO THE PRESIDENT.

" WASHINGTON, April 19th, 1831.

" SIR : I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of yours of this date, in answer to mine of the same.

" In reply to your remark that there is one expression in my letter to which you must except, I would respectfully answer that I gave what I understood to be the substance of your conversation. I did not pretend to quote your language.

" I regret that I misunderstood you in the slightest degree ; I, however, stand corrected, and cheerfully accept the interpretation which you have given to your own expression.

" I shall freely continue my best exertions to discharge the duties of the department, until you provide a successor.

" I have the honor to be, with the greatest respect, your obedient servant,

" JOHN BRANCH.

" To the President of the United States."

## THE PRESIDENT TO MR. BRANCH.

" WASHINGTON, April 20, 1831.

" SIR : Late last evening, I had the honor to receive your letter of that date, tendering your resignation of the office of Secretary of the Navy.

" When the resignations of the Secretary of State and Secretary of War were tendered, I considered fully the reasons offered, and all the circumstances connected with the subject. After mature deliberation, I concluded to accept those resignations. But when this conclusion was come to, it was accompanied with a conviction that I must entirely renew my cabinet. Its members had been invited by me to the stations they occupied ; it had come together in great harmony, and as a unit. Under the circumstances in which I found myself, I could not but perceive the propriety of selecting a cabinet composed of entirely new materials, as being calculated, in this respect at least, to command public confidence and satisfy public opinion. Neither could I be insensible to the fact, that to permit two only to retire would be to afford room for unjust misconceptions and malignant representations concerning the influence of their particular presence upon the conduct of public affairs. Justice to the individuals whose public spirit had impelled them to tender their resignations, also required then, in my opinion, the decision which I have stated. However painful to my own feelings, it became necessary that I should frankly make known to you my view of the whole subject.

" In accepting your resignation, it is with great pleasure that I bear testimony to the integrity and zeal with which you have managed the concerns of the navy. In your discharge of all the duties of your office

over which I have any control, I have been fully satisfied ; and in your retirement you carry with you my best wishes for your prosperity and happiness. It is expected that you will continue to discharge the duties of your office until a successor is appointed.

"I have the honor to be, with great respect, your most obedient servant,

"ANDREW JACKSON.

"JOHN BRANCH, Secretary of the Navy."

MR. BERRIEN TO THE PRESIDENT.

"WASHINGTON, 15th June, 1831.

"SIR: I herewith tender to you my resignation of the office of Attorney-General of the United States. Two considerations restrained me from taking this step at the moment when your communication to the Secretary of the Treasury, announcing your determination to reorganize your cabinet, first met my eye. There was nothing in the retirement of the Secretaries of State and of War, or in the distinct and personal considerations which they had assigned for this measure, which made it obligatory upon, or even proper for me to adopt a similar course. Such a step, with any reference to that occurrence, could only become so, on my part, as an act of conformity to your will. You had felt this, and had announced your wishes to the Secretaries of the Treasury and of the Navy, respectively. I had a right to expect a similar communication of them, and conformed to the wishes and opinions of my fellow-citizens of Georgia, when I determined to await it. An additional consideration was presented by the fact that I had been charged, at the moment of my departure from this place, with the performance of certain public duties which were yet unfinished, and my report concerning which you did not expect to receive until my return. I was gratified to learn from yourself that you had taken the same view of this subject, having postponed the communication of your wishes to me until my arrival at this place, without expecting in the mean time any communication from me. It is due to myself further to state, that from the moment when I saw the communication referred to, I have considered my official relation to you as terminated, or as subsisting only until my return to the city should enable me to conform to your wishes by the formal surrender of my office, which it is the purpose of this note to make.

"I retire, then, sir, with cheerfulness from the station to which your confidence had called me, because I have the consciousness of having endeavored to discharge its duties with fidelity to yourself and the country. Uninfluenced by those considerations which have been avowed by that portion of my colleagues who have voluntarily separated themselves from you—totally ignorant of any want of harmony in your cabinet, which



either has, or ought to have impeded the operations of your administration, I perform this act simply in obedience to your will. I have not the slightest disposition to discuss the question of its propriety. It is true that in a government like ours, power is but a trust to be used for the benefit of those who have delegated it; and that circumstances might exist in which the necessity of self-vindication would justify such an inquiry. The first consideration belongs to those to whom we are both and equally accountable. From the influence of the second you have relieved me by your own explicit declaration that no complaint affecting either my official or individual conduct has at any time reached you. You have assured me that the confidence which induced you originally to confer the appointments upon me remains unshaken and undiminished, and have been pleased to express the regret which you feel at the separation which circumstances have, in your view of the subject, rendered unavoidable. You have kindly added the assurance of your continued good wishes for my welfare. You will not, therefore, refuse to me the gratification of expressing my earnest hope that, under the influence of better counsels, your own and the interests of our common country may receive all the benefits which you have anticipated from the change of your confidential advisers. A very few days will suffice to enable me to put my office in a condition for the reception of my successor, and I will advise you of the fact as soon as its arrangement is complete.

"I am, respectfully, sir, your obedient servant,

"JNO. MACPHERSON BERRIEN.

"To the President of the United States."

THE PRESIDENT TO MR. BERRIEN.

"WASHINGTON, June 15, 1831.

"SIR: I have received your letter resigning the office of Attorney-General.

"In the conversation which I held with you, the day before yesterday, upon this subject, it was my desire to present to you the considerations upon which I acted in accepting the resignation of the other members of the cabinet, and to assure you, in regard to yourself, as well as to them, that they imply no dissatisfaction with the manner in which the duties of the respective departments have been performed. It affords me great pleasure to find that you have not misconceived the character of those considerations, and that you do justice to the personal feelings with which they are unconnected.

"I will only add that the determination to change my cabinet was dictated by an imperious sense of public duty, and a thorough, though painful conviction, that the stewardship of power with which I am clothed called for it as a measure of justice to those who had been alike invited to

maintain near me the relation of confidential advisers. Perceiving that the harmony in feeling so necessary to an efficient administration had failed, in a considerable degree, to mark the course of this, and having assented, on this account, to the voluntary retirement of the Secretaries of State and War, no alternative was left me but to give this assent a latitude coextensive with the embarrassments which it recognized, and the duty which I owed to each member of the cabinet.

"In accepting your resignation as Attorney-General, I take pleasure in expressing my approbation of the zeal and efficiency with which its duties have been performed, and in assuring you that you carry with you my best wishes for your prosperity and happiness.

"I am, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

"ANDREW JACKSON.

"JOHN M. BERRIEN, Esq."

"P. S.—You will please to continue to discharge the duties of the office of Attorney-General until you make all those arrangements which you may deem necessary, on which, when completed, and I am notified thereof by you, a successor will be appointed. A. J."

MR. BERRIEN TO THE PRESIDENT.

"WASHINGTON, June 22, 1831.

"SIR: In conformity to the suggestion contained in my note of the 15th instant, I have to inform you that the arrangements necessary to put the office of Attorney-General in a condition for the reception of my successor are now complete.

"The misrepresentations which are circulated in the newspapers on the subject of my retirement from office, make it proper that this correspondence should be submitted to the public, as an act of justice both to you and to myself. I am, respectfully, sir, your obedient servant,

"JNO. MACPHERSON BERRIEN.

"To the President of the United States."

THE PRESIDENT TO MR. BERRIEN.

"WASHINGTON, June 22, 1831.

"SIR: Your note of this day is received, advising me, in 'conformity to the suggestions contained in my (your) note of the 15th instant. I (you) have'to inform you (me) that the arrangements necessary to put the office of the Attorney-General in a condition for the reception of my successor are now complete.'

"For reasons assigned in your note, you further observe, 'make it proper that this correspondence should be submitted to the public, as an act of justice both to you and myself.' I am sure I can have no objection

to your submitting them as you propose, as you believe this to be necessary. I am, respectfully, your obedient servant,      ANDREW JACKSON.

"JOHN M. BERRIEN, Esq."

A dissolution of the cabinet except at the end of a presidential term, had never before occurred in the United States, and has occurred but once since. So unexpected was this event (the general public having received no intimation of the Eatonian scandals, and not immediately discerning the connection between the cabinet explosion and Mr. Calhoun's pamphlet) that a slight rumor of some approaching change was ridiculed in the Jackson papers within three days of the announcement of Mr. Van Buren's resignation. It produced a prodigious sensation. At that day, all official distinctions were more valued than they now are, and a cabinet minister was regarded as an exceedingly great man. It seemed as if the Republic itself was shaken when the great city of Washington was agitated, as all the hive is wild when the queen-bee is missing. It added to the effect of the dissolution, that the leading editors would not, and the editors-in-ordinary could not give any sufficient explanation of the event. Some vague allusions to 'Madame Pompadour' found their way into print, but the Jackson papers hurled fierce anathemas at those who gave them currency.

The journals in the confidence of the administration had evidently received their cue, however, and strove to make the dissolution redound to the glory of Mr. Van Buren. The comments of the *Courier and Enquirer* will amuse the reader, I think. When the following remarks were written, the resignation of Mr. Berrien, owing to his absence from Washington, had not occurred :

"What has Mr. Calhoun gained by the firebrand he has thrown into the democratic ranks? Mr. Van Buren it is true has retired from office, but he returns to a State where his political knowledge and consistency are invaluable—a State that can and will support him for the highest office when the proper time arrives. Mr. Calhoun has strengthened Mr. Van Buren by his violent opposition—he has returned from the cabinet and is thrown back on the people with a higher reputation for disinterested zeal

and upright principles. In this movement, however, Mr. Calhoun has sacrificed Mr. Ingham and Mr. Branch, his two friends; and the members of the new cabinet are not assailable on any point. How stands the case, then? General Jackson has lost two friends in his cabinet and gained four. Mr. Van Buren becomes a private citizen, and mingles again with his political friends in an energetic support of the President. On all sides General Jackson is strengthened and his enemies discomfited; well indeed, may Mr. Van Buren be called the 'great Magician,' for he raises his wand and the whole cabinet vanishes.

"What will Mr. Calhoun now say to this new order of things? His friends will not venture to declare that Mr. Van Buren rules General Jackson—they can not say that Mr. Van Buren at Albany manages the affairs of the administration at Washington. All motives for assailing Mr. Van Buren are at an end; trouble and difficulty have been produced, but on whom does it fall—who suffers, who almost staggers under the blow? Mr. Calhoun and his imprudent advisers."

This view of the case commended itself to the judgment of a majority of the people, who are apt to relish a bold measure, whatever its moral quality. The comments of the opposition seemed rather to injure than to benefit their cause. One paper in Cincinnati said: "Let John C. Calhoun shake off all affectation of respect for the presumptuous and ignorant dotard, who enjoys the salary and subscribes his name as President." Such language merely enraged and disgusted the friends of the President, and offended some of his opponents. The *New York American* published the following:

"To the Hero—Touching his 'Unit.'  
Your rats united might have been,  
But, should we judge from actions,  
We'd say, although a 'Unit' then,  
They now are *Vulgar* fractions."

Mr. Van Buren returned to New York, where his friends received him triumphantly. Early in August, Mr. McLane arrived from London, and Mr. Van Buren, soon after, went abroad as American Minister to the Court of St. James. Mr. Livingston reigned over the State Department in his stead. Mr. Woodbury was duly appointed Secretary of the Navy.

On one point only did the scheme of the President fail of

success. Judge White refused, point blank, to accept the place of Secretary of War, and thus create a vacancy in the Senate for Major Eaton. He had been, for some time, jealous of Mr. Van Buren's ascendancy in the councils of the President, an ascendancy to which he had himself aspired, and which, for a short period, he had been thought to enjoy. Perhaps he had indulged hopes of being adopted as the successor of General Jackson ; for General Jackson had shown him his list of rules for the guidance of his administration, one of which was that no member of the cabinet should succeed him. The General, too, had written to him, in October, 1828, as soon as his election to the presidency was felt to be certain, in terms which appeared to justify such an expectation. "I thank you kindly," wrote the General, "for the suggestions you have made, and will always thank you for your friendly counsel. We have grown up together, have passed to the top and over the hill of life together, and permit me to assure you there is *no one* in whom I have greater confidence, in their honor, integrity, and judgment than in yours." Again, in December : "It will give me pleasure at all times to receive your views upon all and every subject ; you have my confidence and friendship, and to you and Major Eaton I look as my confidential friends." Again, in the autumn of 1829, the President had written to him in the most affectionate terms, almost imploring him not to resign his seat in the Senate, where his services had been so efficient, and were still so much desired.

Gradually, however, the President seemed to be estranged from his old friend. So, at least, thought some of the associates of Judge White. Mr. Tazewell, a friend of both, recorded his observations. "Judge White," he says, "was one, and, I believe, the most confidential of all the President's advisers, as well before as after his inauguration, while the Senate continued in session. When the Senate adjourned in 1829, Judge White went home and did not return until the commencement of the next session. I was prevented from taking my place in that body until February, 1830.

Very soon after I took my seat, I saw very plainly that new relations had sprung up between the President and some of his former friends. Judge White did not seem to have observed this; and his feelings toward General Jackson remained unchanged, although it was evident to all others, that he no longer occupied the same place in the estimation of the President which he had done. I never knew the cause of this apparent estrangement, but thought it might be easily conjectured."

Was it in human nature, that Judge White should not detest Mr. Van Buren? Knowing well that one object of this dissolution of the cabinet was Mr. Van Buren's elevation, he would not be prevailed upon to lend a helping hand. It is asserted by Colonel Benton, but denied by the biographer of Judge White, that the aspirations of his wife were the spur to his own ambition.

When it was known that Judge White had declined a place in the cabinet, the most extraordinary exertions were made by the President and his friends to induce him to change his purpose. Mr. J. K. Polk, General Coffee, Mr. Grundy, Mr. Catron, General Armstrong, and other Tennessee friends wrote to him, entreating him to accept. General Armstrong's letter was familiar and fervent. "I have just parted from the President," he wrote on the 1st of May. "He informs me, confidentially, that you have declined the office of Secretary of War. The old man said he wrote you yesterday, urging you still to accept. I know your friendship for the President, and I know, too, Judge, the sacrifices you have ever been willing to make for the love of your country. I write this at the request of the old General, because he says I have been present here, and can describe plainly to you the situation of things as they are. The old man says, that *all his plans will be defeated unless you agree to come*; should it be but for a period short of the continuance of his administration. The public have settled down on you, Judge, as the man. The wishes and confidence of every one seem to require your acceptance. Nothing that you can offer will

satisfy your friends ; because, as the old man says—this is a crisis in which he wishes his best friends to be with him—and you well know that you are the nearest ; so he declares, Judge. Now for my own views. The good of the country—the honor of your best friend—the character of the State—and, lastly, it must not be said that aid is refused the old chief from Tennessee, and that, too, by Judge White. Judge, pardon me for attempting to influence you. I write because I know you will do one thing, and that is, believe what I say. Could you but witness the anxiety of the General, and the distress that follows, under the supposition that you will not join him, I know you would yield.”

But, no. He did not yield. The *Courier and Enquirer* informed the public that Judge White, of Tennessee, on account of severe domestic afflictions, had declined the office of Secretary of War, which the President had offered him. From that time to the end of his life, Judge White was *taboo* among the extreme Jacksonians. No more were his public labors extolled in the *Globe* ; no more was his advice asked upon important measures. He went into opposition, at length ; was feebly run for President against Mr. Van Buren ; and was driven, finally, into retirement.

A new man was summoned to the councils of the President, Lewis Cass, Governor of the Territory of Michigan, who was installed as head of the Department of War in July. Though little known, at that day, to the country at large, Governor Cass had been for nearly a quarter of a century in the service of the government. It was he who, as member of the Ohio Legislature in 1806, originated the measures against Aaron Burr which caused the explosion of that individual's Mexican projects. Born in New Hampshire to a revolutionary father, Lewis Cass trudged on foot across the Alleghanies, when he was but seventeen, to seek his fortune in the western wilderness. He studied law, and became a leading man in Ohio ; won the notice and favor of President Jefferson by his zeal against Burr, and received the appointment of marshal. He served with ability and distinction

through the war of 1812, fighting at the battle of the Thames by the side of General Harrison, as his volunteer aid-de-camp. President Madison appointed him, in 1813, Governor of Michigan, a post which he held for the unusual period of nineteen years, until he was invited by General Jackson to the Cabinet in 1831.

The vacant Attorney-Generalship was conferred upon Mr. Roger B. Taney, then Attorney-General of Maryland, now the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States. Mr. Taney was a lawyer of the first distinction in his native State. He was one of the Federalists who had given a zealous support to General Jackson in 1828.

Louis McLane, who came from England to take the office of Secretary of the Treasury, was a native of Delaware, where he studied law under James A. Bayard, known in political history as the friend and correspondent of Alexander Hamilton. Mr. McLane, also, was a gentleman of the Federalist persuasion, and a friend to the Bank of the United States. He had distinguished himself, in London, by the zeal and ability with which he conducted important negotiations, and was supposed to be one of the numerous gentlemen then living who indulged hopes of attaining the presidency.

As the disruption of the Cabinet occurred in April, and Mr. McLane did not return to the United States until August, there was an interregnum in the Treasury Department of more than three months, during which disgraceful events occurred. A few weeks after the dissolution, the scandalous stories respecting Mrs. Eaton began to circulate in the newspapers, and, at length, the various narratives of Messrs. Ingham, Branch, and Berrien appeared. Poor Eaton, stung to madness by the exposure, was betrayed into writing one of the absurdest notes to Mr. Ingham ever penned by an angry man. A hostile correspondence was the first result.

MR. EATON TO MR. INGHAM.

“FRIDAY NIGHT, June 17, 1831.

“SIR: I have studied to disregard the abusive slanders which have arisen through so debased a source as the columns of the *U. S. Telegraph*.



I have been content to wait for the full development of what he had to say, and until persons of responsible character should be brought forth to endorse his vile abuse of me and my family. In that paper of this evening is contained the following remark of my wife: 'It is proved that the Secretaries of the Treasury, and of the Navy, and of the Attorney-General refused to associate with her.' This publication appears in a paper which professes to be friendly to you, and is brought forth under your immediate eye. I desire to know of you, whether or not you sanction, or will disavow it.

"The relation we have sustained toward each other, authorizes me to demand an immediate answer. Very respectfully,

"J. H. EATON.

"S. D. INGHAM, Esq."

MR. INGHAM TO MR. EATON.

"WASHINGTON, June 18, 1831.

"SIR: I have not been able to ascertain, from your note of last evening, whether it is the publication referred to by you, or the fact stated in the *Telegraph*, which you desire to know whether I have sanctioned or will disavow. If it be the first you demand, it is too absurd to merit an answer. If it be the last, you may find authority for the same fact in a Philadelphia paper, about the first of April last, which is deemed to be quite as friendly to you as the *Telegraph* may be to me. When you have settled such accounts with your particular friends, it will be time enough to make demands of others. In the meantime, I take the occasion to say, that you must be a little deranged, to imagine that any blustering of yours could induce me to disavow what all the inhabitants of this city know, and perhaps half the people of the United States believe to be true.

"I am, sir, respectfully yours, S. D. INGHAM.

"JOHN H. EATON, Esq."

MR. EATON TO MR. INGHAM.

"June 18, 1831.

"SIR: I have received your letter of to-day, and regret to find that to a frank and candid inquiry brought before you, an answer impudent and insolent is returned. To injury unprovoked, you are pleased to add insult. What is the remedy! It is to indulge the expectation that, though a man may be mean enough to slander, or base enough to encourage it, he yet may have bravery sufficient to repair the wrong. In that spirit I demand of you *satisfaction* for the wrong and injury you have done me.

"Your answer must determine whether you are so far entitled to the name and character of a gentleman as to be able to act like one.

"Very respectfully, J. H. EATON.

"SAMUEL D. INGHAM, Esq."

MR. INGHAM TO MR. EATON.

“WASHINGTON, June 20, 1831.

“SIR: Your note of Saturday, purporting to be a demand of satisfaction for injury done to you, was received on that day; company prevented me from sending an immediate answer. Yesterday morning your brother-in-law, Dr. Randolph, intruded himself into my room with a threat of personal violence. I perfectly understand the part you are made to play in the farce now acting before the American people. I am not to be intimidated by threats, or provoked by abuse, to any act inconsistent with the pity and contempt which your condition and conduct inspire.

“Yours, sir, respectfully,

S. D. INGHAM.

“JOHN H. EATON, Esq.”

MR. EATON TO MR. INGHAM.

“June 20, 1831.

“SIR: Your note of this morning is received. It proves to me that you are quite brave enough to do a mean action, but too great a coward to repair it. Your contempt I heed not; your pity I despise. It is such contemptible fellows as yourself that have set forth rumors of their own creation, and taken them as a ground of imputation against me. If that be good cause, then should you have pity of yourself, for your wife has not escaped them, and you must know it. But no more; here our correspondence closes. Nothing more will be received short of an acceptance of my demand of Saturday, and nothing more be said to me until face to face we meet. It is not in my nature to brook your insults, nor will they be submitted to.

J. H. EATON.

“S. D. INGHAM, Esq.”

The next day Eaton attempted to carry his threat into execution. In a letter to the President, Mr. Ingham gave a version of the events of that day: “It is not necessary for me now to detail the circumstances which have convinced me of the existence of vindictive personal hostility to me among some of the officers of the government near your person, and supposed to be in your special confidence, which has been particularly developed within the last two weeks, and has finally displayed itself in an attempt to waylay me on my way to my office yesterday, as I have reason to believe, for the purpose of assassination. If you have not already been apprised of these movements, you may perhaps be surprised to learn that the persons concerned in them are the late Sec-

retary of War and the acting Secretary of War ; and that the Second Auditor of the Treasury, Register of the Treasury, and the Treasurer of the United States, were in their company ; and that the Treasurer's and Register's rooms, in the lower part of the building of the Treasury Department, and also a grocery store between my lodgings and the office, were alternately occupied as their rendezvous while lying in wait—the former affording the best opportunity for observing my approach. Apprised of these movements, on my return from taking leave of some of my friends, I found myself obliged to arm, and, accompanied by my son and some other friends, I repaired to the office to finish the business of the day, after which I returned to my lodgings in the same company. It is proper to state, that the principal persons who had been thus employed for several hours, retired from the Department soon after I entered my room, and that I received no molestation from them, either at my ingress or egress. But having recruited an additional force in the evening, they paraded until a late hour on the streets near my lodgings, heavily armed, threatening an assault on the dwelling I reside in."

The President immediately addressed a letter to each of the officials charged with waylaying Mr. Ingham, enclosed to each a copy of Mr. Ingham's letter, and asked to be informed whether "you, or either of you, have had any agency or participation, and if any, to what extent, in the alleged misconduct imputed in his letter herewith enclosed." Every man of them denied in toto the accusations of Mr. Ingham. They were also exculpated by Major Eaton, in a card published in the *Globe*. "From the moment" said Eaton, "that I perceived Mr. Ingham was incapable of acting as became a man, I resolved to pursue that course which was suited to the character of one who had sought difficulties and shunned all honorable accountability. I harbored no design upon the heart of one who had shown himself so heartless. Having ascertained that his sensibilities were to be found only upon the surface, I meant to make the proper application. On the

19th I notified him that unless the *call* I had made upon him was promptly and properly answered, he might expect such treatment as I thought his conduct deserved. My note of the 20th also advised him of my intention. Accordingly it appeared matter of duty for me to dissolve all connection with the administration of the government. How, then, can Mr. Ingham suppose that I would involve those gentlemen in a disgraceful conspiracy against him ; one in which, as public officers, they could not engage even if inclination had sanctioned. Their own characters are a sufficient answer to the accusation, unaided by their positive denial of its truth. I did endeavor to meet Mr. Ingham, and to settle our difference. Unattended by any one, I sought after and awaited his appearance during the accustomed hours for business, openly and at places where he daily passed to his office. He was not to be found ! I passed by, but at no time stopped at or attempted to enter his house, nor to beseige it by day or by night."

The next day Mr. Ingham, finding the city of Washington neither a safe nor a comfortable dwelling-place, left it in disgust, and, the *Globe* said, in terror. He took the " whole of the four o'clock stage," said the *Globe*, and induced the driver to make excellent time to Baltimore. The President, soon after, gave Eaton the appointment of Governor of Florida, where he had lands and lots supposed to be valuable. At a later day, the President sent him to represent the United States at the court of Spain. Upon his return home, Eaton quarreled with his old chief, and remained unreconciled until the day of his death. Mrs. Eaton, in 1859, is still living in the city of Washington.

The dissolution, its causes, and its consequences, were the newspaper topic of the whole summer. The entire correspondence relating to it, beginning with the Calhoun pamphlet, and ending with Eaton's final statement, would form a volume as large as that which the reader is now holding in his hands. Among the documents is a labored, long, and tedious address by Mr. Crawford, justifying himself for be-

traying the proceedings of Mr. Monroe's Cabinet. Eaton's statement asserts many things, but proves nothing. He labors hard, but labors in vain, to show that the alleged irregularities of his wife were a mere pretext, and that the secret of the opposition to himself was, that he was not the friend of Mr. Calhoun.

The dissolution inspired the opposition with new, with extravagant hopes. "Who could have imagined," wrote Mr. Clay from his retirement, "such a cleansing of the Augean stable at Washington? a change, almost total, of the cabinet. Did you ever read such a letter as Mr. Van Buren's? It is perfectly characteristic of the man—a labored effort to conceal the true motives, and to assign assumed ones, for his resignation, under the evident hope of profiting by the latter. The 'delicate step,' I apprehend, has been taken, because, foreseeing the gathering storm, he wished early to secure a safe refuge. Whether that will be on his farm, or at London, we shall see. Meantime, our cause can not fail to be benefited by the measure. It is a broad confession of the incompetency of the President's chosen advisers, no matter from what cause, to carry on the business of the government."

This was written when the news of the explosion first reached Kentucky. Six weeks later, he wrote: "I think we are authorized, from all that is now before us, to anticipate confidently General Jackson's defeat. The question of who will be the successor, may be more doubtful. The probabilities are strongly with us. It seems to me that nothing can disappoint the hopes of our friends, but anti-Masonry."

Mr. Webster took a more serious view of the "prospect before us." He wrote to Mr. Clay, in October, urging his return to the Senate: "We are to have an interesting and an arduous session. Every thing is to be attacked. An array is preparing, much more formidable than has ever yet assaulted what we think the leading and important public interests. Not only the Tariff, but the Constitution itself, in its elementary and fundamental provisions, will be assailed with

talent, vigor, and union. Every thing is to be debated, as if nothing had ever been settled."

True. Nullification hung like a dark cloud over the southern horizon. South Carolina was in a ferment. Unless the Tariff were rectified at the next session, South Carolina would do such things as then she knew not of. Mr. Calhoun, in the course of the summer, in an address that darkened all the first page of the largest newspaper then existing, avowed himself a believer in the doctrine of nullification. Perhaps, this address was a retort to the President's "Charleston letter," so famous in its day, which had delighted the country two months before. That Charleston letter has an interest for us still.

GENERAL JACKSON TO A COMMITTEE OF THE CITIZENS OF CHARLESTON.

"WASHINGTON CITY, June 14th, 1831.

"GENTLEMEN: It would afford me much pleasure, could I at the same time accept your invitation of the 5th instant, and that with which I was before honored by the municipal authorities of Charleston. A necessary attention to the duties of my office, must deprive me of the gratification I should have had in paying, under such circumstances, a visit to the State of which I feel a pride in calling myself a citizen by birth.

"Could I accept your invitation, it would be with the hope that all parties—all the men of talent, exalted patriotism, and private worth, who have been divided in the manner you describe, might be found united before the altar of their country on the day set apart for the solemn celebration of its independence—independence which can not exist without Union, and with it is eternal.

"Every enlightened citizen must know that a separation, could it be effected, would begin with civil discord, and end in colonial dependence on a foreign power, and obliteration from the list of nations. But he should also see that high and sacred duties which must and will, at all hazards, be performed, present an insurmountable barrier to the success of any plan of disorganization, by whatever patriotic name it may be decorated, or whatever high feelings may be arrayed for its support. The force of these evident truths, the effect they must ultimately have upon the minds of those who seem for a moment to have disregarded them, make me cherish the belief I have expressed, that could I have been present at your celebration, I should have found all parties concurring to promote the object of your association. You have distinctly expressed that object—to revive in its full force the benign spirit of the Union, and to renew the mutual confi-

dence in each other's good will and patriotism.' Such endeavors, calmly and firmly persevered in, can not fail of success. Such sentiments are appropriate to the celebration of that high festival; which commemorates the simultaneous declaration of Union and Independence—and when on the return of that day, we annually renew the pledge that our heroic fathers made, of life, of fortune, and of sacred honor, let us never forget that it was given to sustain us as a *United* not less than an *Independent* people.

“Knowing, as I do, the private worth and public virtues of distinguished citizens to whom declarations inconsistent with an attachment to the Union have been ascribed, I can not but hope, that if accurately reported, they were the effect of momentary excitement, not deliberate design; and that such men can never have formed the project of pursuing a course of redress through any other than constitutional means; but if I am mistaken in this charitable hope, then, in the language of the Father of our country, I would conjure them to estimate properly ‘the immense value of your national Union to your collective and individual happiness;’ to cherish ‘a cordial, habitual, and immovable attachment to it; accustoming yourselves to think and speak of it as of the palladium of your political safety and prosperity, watching for its preservation with jealous anxiety: discountenancing whatever may suggest even a suspicion that it can, in any event, be abandoned; and indignantly frowning upon the first dawning of every attempt to alienate any portion of our country from the rest, or to enfeeble the sacred ties which now link together the various parts.’

“Your patriotic endeavors, gentlemen, to lessen the violence of party dissension, can not be forwarded more effectually than by inculcating a reliance on the justice of our National Councils, and pointing to the fast approaching extinction of the public debt, as an event which must necessarily produce modification in the revenue system, by which all interests, under a spirit of mutual accommodation and concession, will be probably protected.

“The grave subjects introduced in your letter of invitation, have drawn from me the frank exposition of opinions, which I have neither interest nor inclination to conceal.

“Grateful for the kindness you have personally expressed, I renew my expressions of regret that it is not in my power to accept your kind invitation; and have the honor to be, with great respect,

“Your obedient and humble servant, ANDREW JACKSON.”

That dread disease, the cholera, was first heard of in the United States this year. It was ravaging some portions of Europe, and making startling advances northward. Long the hope was cherished that the Atlantic ocean would arrest the progress of the scourge. The country escaped it in 1831.

## CHAPTER XXIX.

## THE BANK-VETO SESSION.

THIS was the great session of Jackson's administration. The session of Congress preceding a presidential campaign is always exciting, and generally important ; but none since the earliest years of the republic has been so exciting or so important as this. Illustrious names, great debates, extraordinary incidents, momentous measures, combine to render it memorable.

Strengthened by Mr. Clay's return to the Senate, and supposed to be strengthened by Mr. Calhoun's defection, magnificently endowed with talent, and supplied with every motive to exertion which can inflame ambition or stimulate patriotism, the opposition did all its utmost to lessen the public confidence in an administration which they believed to be, not the most corrupt one ever known in the United States, but the only one that had been corrupt. The "Old Man" of the White House was the strength and inspiration of the party in power. He watched the transactions at the capitol with the eye of a lynx, and the patient resolution of a man who only knows the two alternatives, to carry his point or perish. On the great question of the session he was almost alone. Not one man in his cabinet entirely sympathized with him. It was only in Col. Benton and some members of the kitchen cabinet that he found the complete acquiescence that was so dear, but, at the same time, so unnecessary to him. "Of all the men I have known," said Mr. Blair to me, "Andrew Jackson was the one most entirely sufficient for himself." Not only had he no such word as *fail*, but no belief, not the slightest, that he could fail in any thing seriously undertaken by him. And he never did.

In the Senate of this Congress were Daniel Webster, Henry Clay, William Marcy, Theodore Frelinghuysen, Geo. M. Dallas, John M. Clayton, John Tyler, Robert Y. Hayne,



John Forsyth, Felix Grundy, Hugh L. White, George Poin-dexter, William R. King, Thomas H. Benton, Isaac Hill. In the house—John Quincy Adams, Rufus Choate, Edward Everett, C. C. Cambreleng, Erastus Root, Gulian C. Ver-planck, John Branch, George McDuffie, John Adair, Richard M. Johnson, John Bell, James K. Polk, Thomas Corwin, C. C. Clay.

Curiously enough, the message was one of the quietest and shortest ever presented to Congress by General Jackson. The previous practice of defending the measures of the administration by elaborate argument, and preventing attack by anticipating it, was abandoned in the concoction of this document. It showed everywhere the touch of another hand. The diplomatic successes of the government, which had been numerous during the year, though not of striking importance, were set forth at length. The President concluded this portion of the message with a passage which, besides doing brave duty upon banners and in campaign papers, was quoted with applause in foreign countries. "I have great satisfaction in making this statement of our affairs, because the course of our national policy enables me to do it without any indiscreet exposure of what in other governments is usually concealed from the people. Having none but a straightforward, open course to pursue—guided by a single principle that will bear the strongest light—we have happily no political combinations to form, no alliances to entangle us, no complicated interests to consult; and in subjecting all we have done to the consideration of our citizens, and to the inspection of the world, we give no advantage to other nations, and lay ourselves open to no injury." Edward Livingston had occasion to remember the latter part of this passage a year or two later.

Railroads, then a leading topic, and beginning to assume national importance, were mentioned with felicitations. "We have a reasonable prospect," said the President, "that the extreme parts of our country will be so much approximated, and those most isolated by the obstacles of nature

rendered so accessible, as to remove an apprehension, sometimes entertained, that the great extent of the Union would endanger its permanent existence."

The financial condition of the country was extremely satisfactory. The revenue of the year had reached the unprecedented amount of \$27,700,000. The expenditures, exclusive of the public debt, would not exceed \$14,700,000. Not less than sixteen and a half millions of the public debt had been paid off during the year. The President did not conceal his exultation at this pleasant state of things. "The amount," he added, "which will have been applied to the public debt from the fourth of March, 1829, to the first of January next, which is less than three years since the administration has been placed in my hands, will exceed forty millions of dollars."

In view of the speedy extinction of the debt, Congress was notified that the chief business of the session must be to adjust the tariff to the new state of affairs; but the subject was disposed of in a single paragraph, and nothing further was said of dividing the surplus revenue among the States.

Again, the recommendation respecting the election of President and Vice-President by a direct vote of the people was repeated. Again the message closed with a warning to the United States bank. "Entertaining," said the President, "the opinions heretofore expressed in relation to the bank of the United States, as at present organized, I felt it my duty in my former messages frankly to disclose them, in order that the attention of the legislature and the people should be seasonably directed to that important subject, and that it might be considered and finally disposed of in a manner best calculated to promote the ends of the constitution and subserve the public interests. Having thus conscientiously discharged a constitutional duty, I deem it proper, on this occasion, without a more particular reference to the views of the subject then expressed, to leave it for the present to the investigation of an enlightened people and their representatives."

Of the transactions of this session, we need concern ourselves only with those that grew directly out the President's own course, and those which directly influenced his subsequent conduct.

Without delay, and, I believe, without debate, the Senate confirmed the nominations of Edward Livingston, Louis McLane, Levi Woodbury, Lewis Cass, and Roger M. Taney to their respective places in the cabinet. Not so the nomination of Mr. Van Buren to the post of British ambassador. Mr. Calhoun, at that time, in common with most of the opposition, attributed to the machinations of Mr. Van Buren his rupture with the President, and the dissolution of the cabinet. Mr. Clay and Mr. Webster were of opinion that it was Mr. Van Buren who had induced the President to adopt the New York system of party removals. Mr. Clay ought to have known the President and Mr. Van Buren better than to cherish an opinion so erroneous. But it seems he did not. And, certainly, Mr. Van Buren, by supporting the President in that bad system, and supplying him with plausible arguments to justify it, must ever be held to share in the responsibility of having debauched the public service. I believe, however, that so far from urging the new policy upon the President, his influence tended to lessen the number of removals.

The leaders of the Senate had resolved upon the rejection of Mr. Van Buren. They knew, before Congress came together, that this could be done, and they had discovered an available pretext for doing it. That pretext was found in the very transaction upon which the late Secretary of State plumed himself most, and which General Jackson esteemed the first and one of the most valuable triumphs of his administration.

We noticed, with surprise, that the first Message of General Jackson contained a compliment to Great Britain, a nation which the General, in 1814 and 1815, had characterized by a variety of uncomplimentary epithets, and concerning whose red-coated sons he had revolutionary recollections of a

disagreeable character. The complimentary paragraph was inserted to aid Mr. McLane in a negotiation with the British ministry for regaining the privilege of trading with the British West Indies in American vessels. The negotiation, as we all know, was successful, and the great trade we now enjoy with those islands is chiefly the result of the treaty then concluded. Yet the pretext for rejecting Mr. Van Buren was found in a passage of one of his despatches to Mr. McLane in relation to the negotiation of that treaty—a passage which the President claimed as his own, and authorized a Senator to claim publicly for him. The following was the paragraph complained of :

“ The opportunities which you have derived from a participation in our public councils, as well as other sources of information, will enable you to speak with confidence (as far as you may deem it proper and useful so to do) of the respective part taken by those to whom the administration of this government is now committed, in relation to the course heretofore pursued upon the subject of the colonial trade. *Their views upon that point have been submitted to the people of the United States ; and the counsels by which your conduct is now directed are the result of the judgment expressed by the only earthly tribunal to which the late administration was amenable for its acts.* It should be sufficient that the claims set up by them, and which caused the interruption of the trade in question, have been explicitly abandoned by those who first asserted them, and are not revived by their successors. If Great Britain deems it adverse to her interests to allow us to participate in the trade with her colonies, and finds nothing in the extension of it to others to induce her to apply the same rule to us, she will, we hope, be sensible of the propriety of placing her refusal on those grounds. *To set up the acts of the late administration as the cause of forfeiture of privileges which would otherwise be extended to the people of the United States, would, under existing circumstances, be unjust in itself, and could not fail to excite their deepest sensibility.* The tone of feeling which a course so unwise and untenable is calculated to produce would, doubtless, be greatly aggravated by the consciousness that Great Britain has, by order in Council, opened her colonial ports to Russia and France, notwithstanding a similar omission on their part to accept the terms offered by the act of July, 1825.

“ You can not press this view of the subject too earnestly upon the consideration of the British ministry. It has bearings and relations that reach beyond the immediate question under discussion.”

“ Now,” said Mr. Webster, “ this is neither more nor less than saying to Mr. McLane : ‘ You will be able to tell the British minister, whenever you think proper, that you, and I, and the leading persons in this administration, have opposed the course heretofore pursued by the government and the country, on the subject of the colonial trade. Be sure to let him know that, on that subject, *we* have held with *England*, and *not* with *our own government*.’ ” Mr. Webster added : “ Sir, I submit to you, and to the candor of all just men, if I am not right in saying that the pervading topic throughout the whole is, not American rights, not American interests, not American defense, but denunciation of past *pretensions* of our own country, reflections on the past administrations, and exultation, and a loud claim of merit for the administration now in power. Sir, I would forgive mistakes ; I would pardon the want of information ; I would pardon almost any thing, where I saw true patriotism and sound American feeling ; but I can not forgive the sacrifice of this feeling to mere Party. I can not concur in sending abroad a public agent who has not conceptions so large and liberal, as to feel that in the presence of foreign courts, amidst the monarchies of Europe, he is to stand up for his country, and his whole country ; that no jot nor tittle of her honor is to come to harm in his hands ; that he is not to suffer others to reproach either his government or his country, and far less is he himself to reproach either ; that he is to have no objects in his eye but American objects, and no heart in his bosom but an American heart ; and that he is to forget self, to forget party, to forget every sinister and narrow feeling, in his proud and lofty attachment to the Republic whose commission he bears.”

The debate was animated but brief. Fifty-one days, Colonel Benton informs us, were consumed in the preliminary maneuvers, but the debates lasted but two. It was in the course of this discussion that Governor Marcy let fall an expression which he acknowledged, when he was writing out his speech, that he would have willingly recalled. He had the

honesty to place it upon record, and it has since become famous. It occurred at the end of the following passage : " I know, sir, that it is the habit of some gentlemen to speak with censure or reproach of the politics of New York. Like other States, we have contests, and, as a necessary consequence, triumphs and defeats. The State is large, with great and diversified interests ; in some parts of it, commerce is the object of general pursuit ; in others, manufacture and agriculture are the chief concerns of its citizens. We have men of enterprise and talents, who aspire to public distinction. It is natural to expect from these circumstances and others that might be alluded to, that her politics should excite more interest at home, and attract more attention abroad, than those of many other States in the Confederacy. It may be, sir, that the politicians of New York are not so fastidious as some gentlemen are as to disclosing the principles on which they act. They boldly preach what they practice. When they are contending for victory, they avow their intention of enjoying the fruits of it. If they are defeated, they expect to retire from office ; if they are successful, they claim, as a matter of right, the advantages of success. They see nothing wrong in the rule, that to the victor belongs the spoils of the enemy."

Mr. Van Buren found an able defender in Governor Forsyth of Georgia. " Long known to me," said Mr. Forsyth, " as a politician and as a man, acting together in the hour of political adversity, when we had lost all but our honor—a witness of his movements when elevated to power, and in the possession of the confidence of the chief magistrate, and of the great majority of the people, I have never witnessed aught in Mr. Van Buren which requires concealment, palliation, or coloring—never any thing to lessen his character as a patriot and as a man—nothing which he might not desire to see exposed to the scrutiny of every member of this body, with the calm confidence of unsullied integrity. He is called an artful man—a giant of artifice—a wily magician. Those ignorant of his unrivaled knowledge of human character, his power of

penetrating into the designs, and defeating the purposes of his adversaries, seeing his rapid advance to public honors, and popular confidence, impute to art what is the natural result of those simple causes. Extraordinary talent, untiring industry, incessant vigilance, the happiest temper, which success can not corrupt nor disappointment sour; these are the sources of his unexampled success—the magic arts—the artifices of intrigue, to which only he has resorted in his eventful life. Those who envy his success, may learn wisdom from his example.”

The nomination of Mr. Van Buren was rejected. Colonel Benton in his “Thirty Years, View,” gives us some rare glimpses into the Senate chamber while the deed was in progress: “It was Mr. Gabriel Moore, of Alabama, who sat near me, and to whom I said, when the vote was declared, ‘You have broken a minister, and elected a vice-president.’ He asked me how? and I told him the people would see nothing in it but a combination of rivals against a competitor, and would pull them all down, and set him up. ‘Good God!’ said he, ‘why didn’t you tell me that before I voted, and I would have voted the other way.’”

“On the evening of the day, on the morning of which all the London newspapers heralded the rejection of the American minister, there was a great party at Prince Talleyrand’s—then the representative at the British court, of the new King of the French, Louis Philippe. Mr. Van Buren, always master of himself, and of all the proprieties of his position, was there, as if nothing had happened; and received distinguished attention, and complimentary allusions. Lord Auckland, grandson to the Mr. Eden who was one of the Commissioners of Conciliation sent to us at the beginning of the revolutionary troubles, said to him, ‘It is an advantage of a public man to be the subject of an outrage’—a remark, wise in itself, and prophetic in its application to the person to whom it was addressed. He came home—apparently gave himself no trouble about what had happened—was taken up

by the people—elected, successively, Vice-President and President—while none of those combined against him ever attained either position.

“There was, at the time, some doubt among their friends as to the policy of the rejection, but the three chiefs were positive in their belief that a senatorial condemnation would be political death. I heard Mr. Calhoun say to one of his doubting friends, ‘It will kill him, sir, kill him dead. He will never kick, sir, never kick ;’ and the alacrity with which he gave the casting votes, on the two occasions, both vital, on which they were put into his hands, attested the sincerity of his belief, and his readiness for the work. How those tie-votes, for there were two of them, came to happen twice, ‘hand-running,’ and in a case so important, was matter of marvel and speculation to the public on the outside of the locked-up senatorial door. It was no marvel to those on the inside, who saw how it was done. The combination had a superfluity of votes, and, as Mr. Van Buren’s friends were every one known, and would sit fast, it only required the superfluous votes on one side to go out ; and thus an equilibrium between the two lines was established. When all was finished, the injunction of secrecy was taken off the proceedings, and the dozen set speeches delivered in secret session immediately published—which shows that they were delivered for effect, not upon the Senate, but upon the public mind.”

The rejection secured Mr. Van Buren’s political fortune. His elevation to the presidency, long before desired and intended by General Jackson, became, from that hour, one of his darling objects. The “party,” also, took him up with a unanimity and enthusiasm that left the wire-pullers of the White House little to do. Letters of remonstrance and approbation, signed by influential members of the party, were sent over the sea to Mr. Van Buren, who soon found that his rejection was one of the most fortunate events of his public life. To one of these encouraging letters he forwarded a reply which did him no harm either with the party or the Pres-



ident. "In testifying to my public conduct," he wrote, "the Committee are pleased to speak with eulogium of me, as contributing while in the cabinet to the success of the present administration; that signal success, I feel called upon to declare, is preëminently due to the political sagacity, unwearied industry, and upright, straight forward course of our present venerated chief. All the humble merit I can claim is, that of having exerted myself to the utmost to execute his patriotic and single hearted views, and of having sacrificed all personal considerations to insure their success, when threatened with extraneous embarrassments. That my exertions were arduous, painful, and incessant, I may without vanity, assert: whether my sacrifices have not been repaid with unmerited detraction and reproach, I leave to my countrymen to determine. Still I shall ever regard my situation in that cabinet as one of the most fortunate events of my life, placing me as it did in close and familiar relation with one who has well been described by Mr. Jefferson as, 'possessing more of the Roman in his character than any man living,' and whose administration will be looked to, in future times, as a golden era in our history. To have served under such a chief, at such a time, and to have won his confidence and esteem, is a sufficient glory, and of that, thank God, my enemies can not deprive me."

It is generally supposed that it was the rejection of Mr. Van Buren by the Senate in 1832 that caused him to be adopted by the democratic party as their candidate for the vice-presidency in that year. Col. Benton appears to have been of that opinion. An attentive perusal of the *Globe* and *Courier and Enquirer* for 1831 will convince any one, I think, that before Mr. Van Buren sailed for England, he was the predestined candidate of the party for the second office. I have a curious letter on the subject, addressed in 1831 by Major Lewis to Amos Kendall, which contains an italicized word of much significance. In this letter was suggested, for the first time, the plan of nominating President and Vice-President by national convention—an idea borrowed from

the politics of New York. The following gives an insight into the ways of politicians that the reader ought to prize highly :

MAJOR WM. B. LEWIS TO MR. AMOS KENDALL.

“ WASHINGTON, 25th May, 1831.

“ MY DEAR SIR : Yours of the 17th inst., written from Mr. Isaac Hill's, has been received. I am much gratified to learn that our friends in New Hampshire, and particularly Mr. Hill, are pleased with the appointment of Governor Woodbury. It is important that our friends everywhere should harmonize and act in concert, and particularly in the New England States, where it is by union alone they can expect to succeed.

“ Your information with regard to our Boston friends accords with that which I have received from others. I have lately received several letters from Boston, and among them one from my friend D——, who gives a circumstantial account of Duff's visit to that place. If you see Mr. Derby, please present my respects to him, and say to him I have received his letter. I fear the offices in that place were injudiciously disposed of, as, from all accounts, the gentlemen who hold them look more to themselves than the individual who bestowed them. I am not so sure but it would have been better had they been given to the anti-Statesman party.

“ I feel confident, however, that every reliance may be placed in the good feeling and fidelity of Parker, McNiel, and Derby. The postmaster, N. Green, is with us, but I have not yet been favored with a visit from him. I have no doubt his trip to Washington is for the purpose of ascertaining how the land lies. If that be his object, I incline to the belief that he will not be much gratified at the information he will receive.

“ I have had a conversation with several of our friends here upon the subject of the vice-presidency, and the universal opinion is that it is premature to *nominate* a candidate. There will be great difficulty in selecting an individual who will be satisfactory to the different local interests of the Union. Mr. Barbour, it is feared, will not be acceptable to Pennsylvania and New York ; nor is it believed Dickinson would be willingly supported by the Southern anti-tariff States.

“ Mr. McLane, I am inclined to think, would be the strongest man that could be run by the republican party ; but there are almost insurmountable objections to him. Surrounded by so many difficulties as the case is, and taking every thing into consideration, many of our friends (and the most judicious of them) think it would be best for the republican members of the respective legislatures to propose to the people to elect delegates to a national convention, to be holden for that purpose, at Har-

risburg, or some other place, about the middle of next May. That point is preferred to prevent an improper interference by members of Congress, who about that time will leave this city for their respective homes. If the friends of the administration, when brought together from every part of the Union, in convention, can not harmonize, I know of no other plan by which it can be done. If the legislature of New Hampshire will propose this, I think it will be followed up by others, and have the effect, no doubt, of putting a stop to partial nominations. You had better reflect upon this proposition, and, if you think with me, make the suggestion to our friend Hill.

"In your letter you say, 'Duff said Mr. Calhoun must be run for Vice-President again.' That this is their intention I have no doubt.

"You will see from the *Globe* that we had an unusually large meeting here last evening, friendly to the administration. It is said by those who were present to have been twice as large as the Clay meeting that preceded it. At this meeting it was proposed by one of Duff's partisans to add a preamble and resolutions approving Calhoun's conduct, and nominating him for reelection as Vice-President. The General (Green) had his myrmidons judiciously arranged through the company for effect, and when the question for their adoption was proposed, they vociferated in their favor with prolonged voices. But it would not do; the resolutions were voted down by an overwhelming majority. Mr. Rives, your clerk, who was present, told me that out of a company of about seven hundred, he did not believe there were more than twenty or thirty in favor of the resolutions. Green, I am told, was very much mortified, and looked 'excessively cowed.' Dr. and Mrs. Sharpe have been with us. They left here yesterday. The Doctor, you know, was a strong Calhoun man; continued so until he saw Green; but Blair says he left cured of Calhounism. The General is rather an unfortunate agent for the Vice-President.

"Livingston and Woodbury have entered upon the duties of their respective departments. Judge White has again declined. I do not know who will be selected to fill the War Department, but am rather of the opinion that Col. Drayton will be the man. If so, it is not improbable but the President may offer the appointment of Attorney-General to John Bell, of Nashville. Those appointments, however, are not positively determined on. Every thing here looks well. The President is in good health, and looks well. Mr. Van Buren will leave, probably, the first week in June, and Mr. Eaton about the first of July. Please present my respects to Mrs. Kendall, and believe me to be sincerely yours,

"W. B. LEWIS."

The suggestion with regard to holding a National Convention found favor in the eyes of Mr. Amos Kendall and

Mr. Isaac Hill, though they thought Baltimore a better place for the purpose than Harrisburg. Accordingly, we observe in the *Globe* of July 6th, 1831, one of those mysterious "Extracts from the Letter of a Gentleman" (in Concord, New Hampshire), which are so useful in political management. "The Republican members of the New Hampshire Legislature," said the Extract from the Letter of a Gentleman in Concord, Amos Kendall by name, "to the number of about 169 (whole number of members say 235) met last evening. An address and resolutions approving of the principles and measures of the present administration, the veto of the President on the Maysville Road bill, disavowing the doctrine of nullification, disapproving Clay's American system, but recommending a judicious reduction of the duties, disapproving of the United States Bank, passed the Convention unanimously. The Convention also recommended a General Convention of Republicans friendly to the election of General Jackson, to consist of delegates equal to the number of electors of President in each State, to be holden at Baltimore on the third Monday of May, 1832, to nominate a candidate for Vice-President, and take such other measures in support of the reelection of Andrew Jackson as may be deemed expedient. The Republican party was never more harmonious and united in this State than at the present time. It is completely identified in the support of General Jackson; and it is entirely out of the power of the coalition to shake his popularity in this State. There is no point in which we are better agreed than in decided opposition to re-chartering the United States Bank."

The *Globe* seconded the motion of Major Lewis by appending a few "Remarks" to the Extract from the Letter of a Gentleman in Concord. "It is gratifying to perceive," said the editor of the *Globe*, "that the Bank Extras sent to the members of the New Hampshire Legislature, have only aroused them to the danger of giving prolonged existence to that institution. The recommendation of a Convention at Baltimore to nominate a candidate for the Vice-Presidency

deserves a serious consideration. It is probably the best plan which can be adopted to produce entire unanimity in the Republican party, and secure its lasting ascendancy."

Thus was prepared, beforehand, the machinery by which Mr. Van Buren was nominated, first for the vice-presidency, and, secondly, for the presidency; by which, too, he was afterward overthrown; by which all presidents and vice-presidents, since 1832, have been nominated. With the preparation of this machinery, which he has been accused of originating, he had nothing to do. Nor was he the inventor of it as employed in the politics of his native State.

Returning to the proceedings of Congress, we are compelled to notice a painful and disgraceful affair, in which General Houston, of Texas, was the principal actor. When we last parted with this distinguished man, he had just leaped over the breastwork of the Horseshoe Bend of the Tallapoosa, and had fallen wounded, all but mortally, in doing his duty as ensign of the thirty-ninth infantry. Since that day of terror and of glory, he had run a bright career, and had had various fortune. He had been Governor of Tennessee. He had represented Tennessee in the House of Representatives. But in 1830 he had come to Washington, broken in fortune, unhappy in his domestic circumstances, a suitor for governmental favor. He applied for a contract for supplying rations to the Indians that were about to be removed, at the public expense, beyond the Mississippi. The President was extremely desirous that he should have the contract—so desirous, that he seemed inclined to give it to him, contrary to the spirit of the law, which obliged it to be awarded to the lowest bidder. Colonel McKenney, the Superintendent of Indian Affairs, was of opinion that the rations could be supplied, at a profit, for less than seven cents per day for each Indian. Houston's bid was eighteen cents, which, McKenney thought, would afford a profit of thousands of dollars a week, and, indeed, was equivalent to the bestowal of a large fortune. He also contended that time should be allowed, after advertising for proposals, for bids to come in from the section of

country where the rations were to be furnished. Time was not allowed. The affair was hurried on toward consummation, and it looked, at one time, as though Houston would get the contract at his own price.

At this stage of the proceedings, Duff Green, then the friend, confidential editor, and adviser of the President, heard of the scheme, and, foreseeing the clamor that would arise in case the contract were so bestowed, went to the President to remonstrate against it. "I apologized for calling," he testified afterward before a Committee of the House, "by referring immediately to the contract; said that I was confident that it could be furnished for much less than I understood the department was about to give. The President said that they had ascertained that the ration had cost twenty-two cents; General Houston had gone on to New York, and had brought with him (or obtained) a wealthy partner (or security), and that the contract would be given to him at eighteen cents. I then referred to the price of beef, corn, etc., in the west, and said I was confident the rations could be furnished at six cents. He replied, quickly, 'Will you take it at ten?' I said, 'No, sir.' He then said, 'Will you take it at twelve cents? if you will, you shall have it at that.' I told him that I was not a bidder for the contract; that, although I was satisfied I could realize an immense sum upon such a contract, I was influenced to call upon him by a desire to serve him and the administration, and not by a wish to speculate; and left him."

Not satisfied with this interview, General Green addressed a letter, on the same day, to the Secretary of War on the subject. "After leaving you last evening," he wrote (March, 1830), "I examined, for the first time, your proposals for rations. From my knowledge of the prices of beef and corn in the Western States, I am confident that the proposed ration ought not to cost ten cents, yet I understand you to say that you expect to give from eighteen to twenty cents, and that the issue, at these prices, will amount to twelve thousand dollars per day. That a contract of such amount should be

made without giving notice to the Western States, where the provisions must be purchased, will be a cause of attack ; but when I read the advertisement, and see that it is so worded as not to convey an idea of the speculation it affords, and connect it with the fact, which is within my own knowledge, that it was prepared under the special advisement of General Houston, who has gone on to New York, and has brought on from there a wealthy partner to join him in the contract, I should be unfaithful to the administration, to General Jackson, and to myself, if I did not bring the subject before you in such a shape as to guard against the consequences which I foresee will follow any such contract as the one he contemplates. Such a contract may enrich a few who are concerned in it, but will destroy the confidence of the public, I fear, in the administration, and impair the fair fame of the President, which it is your duty and mine to guard. Will it not be well to extend the time, so as to enable the people of Missouri and Arkansas to bid ?”

Upon further reflection, the President was so far convinced of his error as to give up the plan of furnishing the rations by contract. General Houston was disappointed and thrown upon Texas. And, perhaps, the United States owes the possession of that State to the failure of General Houston to obtain the contract for supplying the Indians.

Some of the facts here related having gained publicity, General Houston and his contract became the subject of many newspaper articles, satirical and vituperative. In the summer of 1831, Houston published a Proclamation of a comical nature, intended to neutralize those attacks :

#### “ A PROCLAMATION!!!

“ Whereas, I have recently seen a publication, originating in the Cherokee Nation, east of the Mississippi, dated ‘ 18th May, 1831,’ and signed ‘ I S.,’ which said publication, or letter, has been republished in several newspapers, such as the *Kentucky Reporter*, *United States Telegraph*, etc., and as I presume it will find a general circulation, notwithstanding the absurd personalities which it contains ; and as it is not the first which has found its way into the public prints, containing ridiculous and unfounded abuse

of me :—Now know all men by these presents, that I, Sam. Houston, 'late Governor of the State of Tennessee,' do hereby declare to all scoundrels whomsoever, that they are authorized to accuse, defame, calumniate, traduce, slander, vilify, and libel me, to any extent, in personal or private abuse. And I do further proclaim, to whomsoever it may concern, that they are hereby permitted and authorized to write, indite, print, publish, and circulate the same, and that I will in nowise hold them responsible to me in law, nor honor, for either the use of the 'raw material,' or the fabrication of any, or all of the above named articles connected with the 'American System?' nor will I have recourse to nullification, in any case whatsoever, where a conviction would secure to the culprit the dignity of a penitentiary residence. And as some ingenuity has been already displayed in the exhibition of specimens, and others may be induced to invest a small capital in the business, from feelings of emulation and an itching after experiment, Be it known, for the especial encouragement of all scoundrels hereafter, as well as those who have already been engaged, that I do solemnly propose on the first day of April next, to give to the author of the most elegant, refined, and ingenious lie or calumny, a handsome gilt copy (bound in sheep) of the *Kentucky Reporter*, or a snug, plain copy of the *United States Telegraph* (bound in dog), since its commencement.

"Given under my hand and private seal (having no seal of office) at Nashville, in the State of Tennessee, 13th July, 1831.

"SAM. HOUSTON. [L. s.]"

In the spring of 1832 he was in Washington again, where he forgot his Proclamation. Before leaving the capital to enter upon his new and marvelous career in the Southwest, he was betrayed by his passions into the commission of an act which subjected him to the censure of the House of Representatives, and which he himself must, long ago, have learned to deplore. He committed a most atrocious and unprovoked assault upon a member of the House of Representatives, Mr. William Stanberry, of Ohio. The following correspondence explains itself :

GENERAL HOUSTON TO MR. WILLIAM STANBERRY.

"WASHINGTON CITY, April 2d, 1832.

"SIR: I have seen some remarks in the *National Intelligencer* of the 2d instant, in which you are represented to have said, 'Was the late Secretary of War removed in consequence of his attempt fraudulently to give to Governor Houston the contract for Indian Rations?'



"The object of this note is to ascertain whether my name was used by you in debate, and, if so, whether your remarks have been correctly quoted.

"As the remarks were inserted in anticipation of their regular place, I hope you will find it convenient to reply without delay. I am, your most obedient servant,  
SAM. HOUSTON."

WILLIAM STANBERRY TO GAVE JOHNSON.

"HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, April 4th, 1833.

"SIR: I received this morning by your hands a note, signed Sam. Houston, quoting from the *National Intelligencer* of the 2d instant, a remark made by me in the House. The object of the note is to ascertain whether Mr. Houston's name was used by me in debate, and whether my remarks were correctly quoted.

"I can not recognize the right of Mr. Houston to make this request.

"Very respectfully yours, etc.,

"WILLIAM STANBERRY."

Exasperated by this reply, Houston made no secret of his intention to assault Mr. Stanberry, who, from that time, went armed to and from the capitol. Ten days elapsed, however, before the bad design of the irate Tennessean was executed, and it was executed then with peculiar circumstances of atrocity. Senator Buckner, of Missouri, stood by and saw it done, and afterward testified without a blush, that he made no attempt to prevent the shameful deed. Houston, he said, was standing near a fence in one of the avenues, when Mr. Stanberry came along. "It occurred to me immediately, that there would be a difficulty between them. 'Are you Mr. Stanberry?' asked Houston. Stanberry replied very politely, bowing at the same time, 'Yes, sir.' 'Then,' said Houston, 'you are the damned rascal;' and with that, struck him with a stick which he had held in his hand. Stanberry threw up his hands over his head and staggered back. His hat fell off, and he exclaimed, 'Oh, don't!' Houston continued to follow him up, and continued to strike him. After receiving several severe blows, Stanberry turned, as I thought, to run off. Houston, at that moment, sprang upon him in the rear, Stanberry's arms hanging down, apparently defenceless. He seized him and attempted to throw him, but was

not able to do so. Stanberry carried him about on the pavement some little time. Whether he extricated himself, or Houston thrust him from him, I am not able to determine. I thought he thrust him from him. As Houston passed him, he struck him and gave him a trip—Stanberry fell. When he fell, he continued to halloo; indeed, he hallooed all the time pretty much, except when they were scuffling. I saw Stanberry, after receiving several blows, put out both hands, he then lying on his back. I did not discover what was in his hands, or if any thing was, but I heard a sound like the snapping of a gun-lock, and I saw particles of fire. Houston appeared to take hold of Stanberry's hands and took something from them which I could not see. After that, Houston stood up more erect, still beating Stanberry with a stick over the head, arms, and sides, Stanberry still keeping his arms spread out. After Houston had given him several more blows, he lay on his back and put up his feet. Houston then struck him *elsewhere*. Mr. Stanberry, after he had received several blows, ceased to halloo, and lay, as I thought, perfectly still. All this time I had not spoken to either of the parties, or interfered in any manner whatever. I now thought Stanberry was badly hurt, or, perhaps, killed, from the manner in which he lay. I stepped up to Houston to tell him to desist, but, without being spoken to, he quit of his own accord. Mr. Stanberry then got up on his feet, and I saw the pistol in the right hand of Gov. Houston for the first time."

On the day following, the Speaker of the House of Representatives received a note from Mr. Stanberry: "Sir, I was waylaid in the street, near to my boarding-house, last night about eight o'clock, and attacked, knocked down by a bludgeon, and severely bruised and wounded by Samuel Houston, late of Tennessee, for words spoken in my place in the House of Representatives, by reason of which I am confined to my bed, and unable to discharge my duties in the house, and attend to the interests of my constituents. I communicate this information to you, and request that you will lay it before the house."

The Speaker laid it before the house, and the house spent exactly one calendar month in debating the subject, hearing testimony, and the defense of the accused. James K. Polk, of Tennessee, distinguished himself by his zeal in endeavoring to prevent an investigation. The end of the matter in the house was that Houston was condemned to be reprimanded by the Speaker; and reprimanded he was, but in such a manner as to leave the house in no doubt that the Speaker (Andrew Stephenson) sympathized with the assailant rather than with the assailed—with General Houston rather than with the insulted house over which he presided.

General Jackson, I regret to be obliged to record, sustained his friend Houston in this bad deed. He said to a friend, in substance, that "after a few more examples of the same kind, members of Congress would learn to keep civil tongues in their heads." Perhaps the people of the United States will learn, after a few more examples of the same kind, that the man who replies to a word by a blow confesses by that blow the justice of that word. At a later day, when Houston was tried for this assault in a court of the District of Columbia, and was sentenced to pay a fine of five hundred dollars, the President nullified the proceeding by the little document annexed :

"I, Andrew Jackson, President of the United States of America, to the Marshal of the District of Columbia, greeting :

"Whereas, at a session of the Circuit Court of the United States, held in and for the county of Washington and District of Columbia, in the year 1832, a certain Samuel Houston was convicted of an assault and battery, and sentenced to pay a fine of five hundred dollars and costs of prosecution :

"Now be it known that I, Andrew Jackson, President of the United States of America, in consideration of the premises, divers good and sufficient reasons me thereunto moving, have remitted, and do hereby remit unto him, the said Samuel Houston, the fine aforesaid, in order that he be discharged from imprisonment.

"In testimony whereof I have hereunto subscribed my name, and caused the seal of the United States to be affixed to these presents.

Done at the city of Washington, this third day of July, A. D. 1834, and of the Independence of the United States the fifty-eighth.

“ANDREW JACKSON.”

“By the President.

“JOHN FORSYTH, Secretary of State.”

While the Houston affair was still the talk of the country, another member of Congress, Thomas D. Arnold, of Tennessee, was most grossly assaulted, and that, too, upon the very threshold of the house, and in the presence of a hundred members. A certain Major Heard thought proper to take offense at the zeal with which Mr. Arnold had denounced the conduct of Houston in the House of Representatives. Meeting Arnold in the streets, he attempted to assault him there, but was deterred by the member's resolute defiance. “I was accosted,” said Mr. Arnold, in a card published in the *Telegraph*, “by a man of ruffian appearance, who required me to stop. I did so. He approached pretty near. I discovered he was very much agitated; his lip quivered, and he turned pale. He asked if my name was Arnold; I told him it was. He said, ‘Then you are the man who abused my friend Houston so severely.’ He was going to say something else, but the instant I saw the subject he had broached, I demanded to know his name. He replied his name was Heard, and added, Major Heard. I told him I knew nothing of him, and intended to have nothing to do with him. I fortunately had a walking-cane in my hand, and kept it in such a position that he saw I could strike as soon as he could. He wore a cap, and had a large stick in his hand; I think it was an orange limb, headed and feruled. I turned my back upon him as soon as I could do it in safety. As I walked off, he said he ‘intended to whip me, and that he would do it yet, by God.’ He did not pursue me, as I discovered. I do not wish to be protected by my constitutional privilege, but I think it due to the American people that they should know the state of things at this place.”

A few days after, Heard accomplished his purpose. Just after the adjournment of the house, the ruffian fell upon Mr.

Arnold with a club, and failing to bring him to the ground with that weapon, fired a pistol at him. The ball grazed Arnold's arm and tore his coat, and passing over his shoulder, came within an ace of entering the body of Mr. Tazewell. Arnold felled the assailant to the ground with his cane, and was about to stab him with the sword thereof, when his arm was caught by a bystander, and Heard was taken to prison.

Having disposed of these personal matters, we may now proceed to affairs more important. The two great topics of the session were the tariff and the bank. The tariff bill passed at this session having been the direct cause of the nullification explosion, it will be convenient to defer our account of it until we come to speak of nullification. As the long session wore on, all other subjects were swallowed up in the discussion of the question, Shall the bank of the United States be re-chartered, or shall it not? Congress, the press, the President, the people, politicians, business men, all men, were drawn into the maelstrom of this great debate. We, too, for our sins, must skirt its borders, if not plunge headlong in, never to emerge.

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## CHAPTER XXX.

### THE BANK VETO.

THERE was division in the Bank councils. A large number of the Bank's wisest friends desired, above all things, to keep the question of re-chartering out of the coming presidential campaign. Others said: "It is now or never with us. We have a majority in both Houses in favor of re-chartering. Let us seize the opportunity while we have it, for it may never return." "No," said the opposite party, "the President will most assuredly veto the bill; and we can not carry it over the veto. Then, if the President is reëlected,

which, alas ! is only too possible, the Bank is lost irrecoverably. Precipitation gives us but one chance ; delay may afford us many."

Mr. Clay's powerful will decided this controversy. Said he, in substance, " We have the President in a dilemma, upon one of the horns of which we can certainly transfix him. The legislature of his favorite State, his own devoted Pennsylvania, has unanimously pronounced in favor of re-chartering the Bank. The Bank is *in* Pennsylvania. Pennsylvania is proud of it, and thinks her prosperity identified with it. If the President vetoes the bill, he loses Pennsylvania, the bulwark of his power and popularity. If he does not veto the bill, he loses fatally in the South and West. Now is our time." This reasoning may not have quite convinced the leading friends of the Bank ; but the commanding influence of Henry Clay, then in the very zenith of his power and of his fame, caused it to be adopted as the policy of the institution.

How little he knew Pennsylvania, the State that, for forty years, has generally controlled politics ! " Go, my son, study Pennsylvania," should be the advice of a parent launching his offspring into the sea of American politics. Pennsylvania, large, solid, heavy, and central, is the ballast State of the Union. Pennsylvania represents the " general average" of sense and feeling. An event that thrills Ohio, drives New England mad, and New York frantic, only ruffles, and that but for a moment, Pennsylvania's ample and placid countenance. Can you move Pennsylvania ? Then you are master of the situation.

Early in December, when Congress had been less than two weeks in session, a convention of National Republicans (soon to be styled Whigs) assembled at Baltimore to nominate opposition candidates for the presidency and the vice-presidency. So soon did Major Lewis's suggestion bear fruit. Henry Clay and John Sergeant were the candidates selected, both devoted to the Bank, one a citizen of Pennsylvania. In the Address issued by the Convention the Bank question was

made a leading issue of the contest. The Bank was eulogized as a "great and beneficent institution," which, "by facilitating exchanges between different parts of the Union, and maintaining a sound, ample, and healthy state of the currency, may be said to supply the body politic, economically viewed, with a continual stream of life-blood, without which it must inevitably languish and sink into exhaustion."

Three times, the address continued, the President had gone out of his way to denounce this blessed fountain of national life, as "a sort of nuisance, and consign it, as far as his influence extends, to immediate destruction." If, therefore, the President be reelected, it is all over with the Bank of the United States. "Are the people of the United States prepared for this? Are they ready to destroy one of their most valuable establishments to gratify the caprice of a chief magistrate who reasons and advises upon a subject, with the details of which he is evidently unacquainted, in direct contradiction to the opinion of his own official counselors?"

If any such there be, they will vote for Andrew Jackson. But no, fellow-citizens, we have a higher opinion of your good sense and patriotism. Clay and Sergeant, the great defenders of the sacred Bank, are, unquestionably, the men for whom you will cast your votes.

So the issue between the opposition and the administration was joined. The administration, there is good reason to believe, would have gladly avoided the issue at this session. Mr. Clay wrote to a friend, a few days after the publication of the address: "The Executive is playing a deep game to avoid, at this session, the responsibility of any decision on the bank question. It is not yet ascertained whether the bank, by forbearing to apply for a renewal of their charter, will or will not conform to the wishes of the President. I think they will act very unwisely if they do not apply." I am likewise assured, upon authority no less distinguished than Mr. Edward Livingston, that, at this stage of the contest, the President was really disposed to cease the war upon the bank. It was Mr. Livingston's opinion that if, at the beginning of

this session, the bank had shown a little complaisance to the President, had consulted him, had consented to certain modifications of its charter, the President could have been induced to sign the re-chartering bill. Mr. Biddle and Mr. Clay determined otherwise. They seized the earliest moment to taunt and defy the President, who accepted the issue.

On the 9th of January, Mr. George M. Dallas, of Pennsylvania, presented to the Senate a memorial from the president and directors of the bank, asking a renewal of their charter. The memorial, which was chiefly an apology for what might seem a premature agitation of the subject, was couched in language most modest and respectful. It was not for them, said the directors, to speak of the value to the public of an institution established with so much difficulty and conducted with so much toil. But the bank was connected in so many ways with the business of the country, that it was highly desirable the country should learn, as soon as possible, whether the present financial system was to cease on the 4th of March, 1836, or endure for many years to come. If Congress, in its wisdom, should decree the extinction of the bank, the directors would do all in their power to aid the community to devise new financial facilities, and would endeavor to close the bank with as little detriment to the business of the country as their experience in the management of financial affairs would enable them.

In presenting this gentlemanlike memorial, Mr. Dallas, a friend of the bank, admitted that he thought its presentation, just then, unwise. He feared that the bank "might be drawn into real or imagined conflict with some higher, some more favorite, some more immediate wish or purpose of the American people." Observe the senator's descending scale of adjectives: "Some higher, some more favorite, some more immediate." Hard lot, to be a statesman in a country where all politics necessarily resolve themselves into a contest for the first office—a contest renewed as soon as the wretched incumbent has taken his seat! Not what is best, but what will tell in the presidential campaign, is always the question.



The memorial, presented thus early in the session, was a prominent subject of debate during all the winter and spring of 1832. January, February, March, April, May, and June, passed away before the final passage of the bank bill was voted upon. And never was there exhibited so striking an illustration of the maxim, that WILL, not talent, governs the world. The will of one man, Andrew Jackson, operating upon the will of one other man, Thomas H. Benton, carried the day against the assembled talent and the interested capital of the country. The bank, as we all now believe, ought to have fallen ; but the mode in which the war against it was conducted, was arrogant, ferocious, and mean. Instead of opposing it on broad Jeffersonian principles, Benton kept assailing it with charges of misconduct, most of which were frivolous, and all of any importance were proved to be false. Never were the affairs of an institution so microscopically investigated. Never was one shown to be more free from intentional or unintentional blame. I boldly affirm, that in the huge volume containing the results of the official investigation, published in the spring of 1832, not one accusation involving the integrity of the directors is sustained. The bank was proved to have been conducted with honesty and skill. Nor had the conduct or misconduct of the bank any thing to do with the question whether or not the bank had a right to exist. The mode adopted of assailing the institution could not have much effect upon Congress, and was not expected to have. The people, the voters at the next presidential election, were the individuals sought to be influenced by it.

Col. Benton confesses as much in his "Thirty Years' View." "Seeing," he says, "that there was a majority in each house for the institution, and no intention to lose time in arguing for it, our course of action became obvious, which was, to attack incessantly, assail at all points, display the evil of the institution, rouse the people, and prepare them to sustain the veto. It was seen to be the policy of the bank leaders to carry the charter first, and quietly, through the Senate ; and afterward, in the same way in the House. We

determined to have a contest in both places, and to force the bank into defenses which would engage it in a general combat, and lay it open to side-blows, as well as direct attacks. With this view a great many amendments and inquiries were prepared to be offered in the Senate, all of them proper or plausible, recommendable in themselves, and supported by acceptable reasons, which the friends of the bank must either answer, or reject without answer ; and so incur odium. In the House it was determined to make a move, which, whether resisted or admitted by the bank majority, would be certain to have an effect against the institution—namely, an investigation by a committee of the house, as provided for in the charter. If the investigation was denied, it would be guilt shrinking from detection ; if admitted, it was well known that misconduct would be found. I conceived this movement, and had charge of its direction. I preferred the House for the theater of investigation, as most appropriate, being the grand inquest of the nation ; and, besides, wished a contest to be going on there while the Senate was engaged in passing the charter ; and the right to raise the committee was complete in either house. Besides the right reserved in the charter, there was a natural right, when the corporation was asked for a renewed lease, to inquire how it had acted under the previous one. I got Mr. Clayton, a new member from Georgia (who had written a pamphlet against the bank in his own State), to take charge of the movement, and gave him a memorandum of seven alleged breaches of the charter, and fifteen instances of imputed misconduct to inquire into, if he got his committee ; or to allege on the floor if he encountered resistance.”

Mr. Clayton did encounter resistance. “All these charges,” continues Col. Benton, “he read to the house, one by one, from a narrow slip of paper, which he continued rolling round his finger all the time. The memorandum was mine—in my hand-writing—given to him to copy and amplify, as they were brief memoranda. He had not copied them ; and having to justify suddenly, he used the slip I had given him,

rolling it on his finger, as on a cylinder, to prevent my handwriting from being seen : so he afterward told me himself. The reading of these twenty-two heads of accusation, like so many counts in an indictment, sprung the friends of the bank to their feet—and its foes also—each finding in it something to rouse them—one to the defense, the other to the attack.”

The committee of investigation was appointed, and appointed, of course, by an anti-bank speaker. It consisted of seven members—Mr. Clayton, of Georgia, (chairman), Richard M. Johnson, Francis Thomas, C. C. Cambreleng, George McDuffie, John Quincy Adams, and Mr. Watmough. The first four of these gentlemen were opposed to re-chartering the bank ; the last three were in favor of it. On the 23d of March, the committee had reached Philadelphia, and begun their investigations. Fifty days elapsed before the committee were ready to report, and then they were unable to agree. Three separate reports were accordingly presented to the House, one by the majority, one by the minority, and one by Mr. Adams. The last two exonerated the bank from all the important charges, and the report of Mr. Adams declared that the bank had been conducted with as near an approach to perfect wisdom as the imperfection of human nature permitted. These three reports, with the documents appended, form an octavo volume of five hundred and seventy-two pages.

Believing that the mode in which the bank had been conducted had nothing to do with the question of re-chartering, which ought to have been debated, and was decided on other grounds, I shall pass lightly over these formidable reports. Two or three points, however, are interesting in themselves, and may worthily detain us a moment.

One of the Bentonian accusations against the Bank was, that it had issued notes not signed by the president and cashier. The directors showed that this was owing to the physical impossibility of those officers signing the number of notes required by the parent Bank and its twenty-five

branches. Consequently, after taking the opinion of the three great lawyers of the day, Horace Binney, Daniel Webster, and William Wirt, the directors had authorized the presidents and cashiers of the twenty-five branches to issue *checks*, which closely resembled the notes of the Bank in general appearance, and were not usually distinguished from them.

Another of the charges urged by Colonel Benton was, that the Bank was criminally profuse in its accommodation to editors who favored the re-chartering. Two cases were investigated—a loan to Duff Green, of the *Telegraph*, and loans to the proprietors of the *New York Courier and Enquirer*. It was shown, first, that the loan to General Green was a safe and legitimate business transaction ; secondly, that at the time the loan was made, the *Telegraph* had led the opposition against the Bank ; thirdly, that when applying for the loan, Green had expressly stated that “no accommodation given by the Bank will induce me to alter, in any respect, the course which my paper has pursued in relation to it ;” fourthly, that Mr. Biddle had replied in the following terms : “The Bank is glad to have friends from conviction ; but seeks none from interest. For myself, I love the freedom of the press too much to complain of its occasional injustice to me ; and if the loan be made, it shall be with a perfect understanding—to be put into the note, if necessary—that the borrower is to speak his mind about the Bank just as freely as he did before, which I take to be ‘ample room and verge enough.’ ”

The case of Colonel Webb and the *Courier* received an extraordinary share of attention. The readers of a New York newspaper were daily reminded, for about ten years, and are not yet permitted to forget, that the amount of the accommodation afforded by the Bank to the *Courier and Enquirer*, at different times, was \$52,975. There were three editors of that important newspaper in 1830, James Watson Webb, M. M. Noah, and James Gordon Bennett ; the two latter opposed to the re-charter in toto ; the first, opposed to certain fea-

tures of the Bank, but in favor of re-chartering it with modifications. The anti-Bank articles, which were a specialty of the paper in 1830, were written by Messrs. Noah and Bennett; most of them by Bennett, who had an aversion to all banks, and who knew, and knows, how important it is to a daily paper to have an imposing and powerful object to attack. Colonel Webb was not the author of one of these articles, though he permitted their insertion, and approved them as a part of the party tactics of the hour. Nor was he aware, at that time, that the President was prepared to carry his hostility to the Bank to the point of its total extinction.

“The first article,” said Colonel Webb, in a letter to Mr. Cambreleng, “which ever appeared in our columns, was written in Washington about a month previous to the Message of 1829. It was inserted in our columns during my absence from the city, or without my examination. I disapproved of it, its arguments, and conclusions. I never, in my life, wrote a line against the Bank, but I permitted and sanctioned articles against it because we had become committed; because the President had assailed it, and because I was under the erroneous impression that it was prostituted to the advancement of Henry Clay to the presidency. I became convinced that this was not the case, and I eagerly seized upon the expression of a Jackson legislature in Pennsylvania, upon the danger of embroiling the two States (the folly of which Mr. Van Buren now suffers under), and the going out of Tylee\* and coming in of Noah, to take the course which I was persuaded would best subserve the interests of the people, and, at the same time, accord fully with my own opinions.”

The first consequence to the paper of its espousal of the cause of the bank was a refusal on the part of the New York banks to afford it pecuniary accommodation. “I can prove,” said Colonel Webb, in the same letter to Mr. Cambreleng, “that at the time of our espousing the re-charter of the United States’ Bank, we had \$13,500 of accommodation in

\* A former proprietor.

the City Bank alone, on the endorsement of Mr. A. L. Stewart ; that we had a large similar accommodation for nearly two years from this one institution ; that in consequence of our favorable opinions of the United States' Bank, they made us pay up every penny of our accommodation, and threw out our note with Mr. Stewart's endorsement ; that the Manhattan and National Banks pursued the same course ; and that, in consequence, we were cut off from our usual resources of obtaining those accommodations to which the amount of our capital employed, and the extent of our business entitled us, and which we surely did not sacrifice by publishing a newspaper. We were literally proscribed by our local institutions. I went to Philadelphia, and gave to Mr. Biddle a full and perfect history of our paper, and asked for a loan of \$20,000. It was granted."

The statement forwarded by Colonel Webb of the business of his establishment, the first of the kind then existing in the country, proved that the loans granted by the bank were safe, proper, and usual. Some of the items will interest gentlemen connected with the press : 3300 daily subscribers at ten dollars ; 2300 weekly or semi-weekly subscribers, at an average of four dollars and fifty cents ; 275 advertising subscribers, at thirty dollars ; daily income from advertising, fifty-five dollars ; daily cash receipts for advertising, ten dollars ; gross annual income, \$60,750 ; expenses, \$35,000 ; profit, \$25,750 ; annual cost of paper, \$22,000. Colonel Webb considered the establishment worth \$150,000.

The most signal triumph of the bank and its president, during this investigation, occurred in connection with the testimony of Reuben M. Whitney. Whitney had formerly been a merchant of Philadelphia and a director of the Bank of the United States. At this time, he was a bankrupt, and one of the bank's most rancorous enemies, and the chief source of Colonel Benton's catalogue of charges. When testifying before the committee he gave such evidence as must have blasted for ever the good name of the president of the bank, if it had not been demonstrated to be the foulest perjury. Observe

the circumstantial manner in which this individual told his scandalous tale :

*Question by Mr. Clayton.* Did Mr. Thomas Wilson, the former cashier, ever acquaint you with any circumstance relating to the accounts of Mr. Thomas Biddle in the bank ? if yea, state fully what it was.

*Answer.* Some time in 1823, Mr. Wilson and Mr. Andrews mentioned to me that some transactions had taken place in the bank in which T. and J. G. Biddle\* were concerned, which they were not willing should exist without some member of the board being informed of them. I asked what they were. They replied that T. and J. G. Biddle had been in the habit of coming to the bank, and getting money, and leaving certificates of stock which represented it, in the first teller's drawer, without paying interest. They also stated, that the Messrs. Biddle had had notes discounted for them by the president, which were entered on the books of the preceding discount day. I asked them what sums there were of the kind in existence at that time. They went with me to the first teller's drawer, and we found one sum of \$45,000, dated 25th May, and one for \$24,000, dated 26th May. We then went to the discount clerk's desk, and found one note at fifteen days, dated 13th May, for \$20,000 of T. Biddle's, and one note of Charles Biddle's, dated 21st May, at sixteen days, for \$38,319. The two former sums represented cash, and the two latter new notes, which they stated to me had been discounted by order of the president. Of all these I made a memorandum (now produced) at the time, which corresponds with the entries now in the books now shown to me.

*Question by Mr. Thomas.* Did you communicate these matters to the president ? if yea, state when and where.

*Answer.* Immediately after examining the books I came into the president's room and communicated to him what had been communicated to me, and what I had learned by examining the books. After stating this, I desired that nothing of a similar nature should occur while I was a director of the bank. *He told me there should not.*

*Question by Mr. Clayton.* Did you not direct the officers to enter what you discovered on the books, and was it done ?

*Answer.* I directed the officers to enter on the books the money that had been loaned from the teller's drawer, and which was represented by stock certificates. It was done ; I did not see it done, but I know it was done. Subsequently I saw this entry of "bills receivable," which I knew was the entry made for that purpose. In the entry in the semi-weekly statement, or state of the bank, under date of 27th May, under head of bills receivable, the sum of \$69,000 is entered, which is the exact amount

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of the two sums of \$45,000, and \$24,000, represented by stock certificates in the teller's drawer.

*Question by Mr. Adams.* Did you in your communication, immediately after directing the entries to be made in the books, inform the president that you had directed those entries to be made?

*Answer.* I can not say that I did.

*Question by Mr. McDuffie.* The memorandum you have produced is the one before referred to by you; when was it made?

*Answer.* I made it at the time the communication was made to me by Mr. Wilson and Mr. Andrews, and this memorandum now produced is the one.

*Question by Mr. Adams.* Have you ever had any communication, written or verbal, on this subject, with any member of the committee?

*Answer.* I have, verbally, with Mr. Clayton, and in the presence of Mr. Cambreleng. I have also told different individuals of it immediately after it occurred, as well as at various times since.

*Question by Mr. Adams.* Did you go to Mr. Clayton without any previous solicitation?

*Answer.* I had received a letter from Colonel Benton, informing me he had recommended Judge Clayton to me.

*Question by Mr. Biddle, the President of the Bank.* Where did the alleged conversation between you, Mr. Wilson, and Mr. Andrews, take place?

*Answer.* In the area of the banking room, not far from the first teller's desk. These gentlemen, one or both of them, went with me to the teller's desk. I made the memorandum of the cash there, and my memorandum of the notes I made at the discount clerk's desk; one or both of them went with me to the discount clerk's desk, and there I made my memorandum of the notes. Mr. Burtis was, I think, the discount clerk. I can not say whether I directed the entries on the books of the loans before I went to the discount clerk. I gave the direction to both Mr. Wilson and Mr. Andrews, if both were present, or to but one, if only one was present. I stated to you the particulars I had learned, as stated in the memorandum. You did not deny them. *You colored up a good deal.* I can not say whether there was any person who could have overheard this conversation, but I presume not. I can not say whether or not I have had any conversation with them since; I think it probable I have, as I do not know how else I learned that the item of bills receivable related to these transactions.

At the moment, Mr. Biddle, astounded at this damning testimony, could only deny that it contained one syllable of truth. Shortly after, however, he proved to the committee,



by evidence the most incontestible, that (to use his own language), "on the very day when R. M. Whitney swears that he conversed with me in this room at Philadelphia, where we are now sitting—for many days before that day, and for many days after that day—I *was actually in the city of Washington*. The first evidence is the original minutes of the bank, by which it will be seen, that, from the 22d day of May to the 1st of June, I was absent from the bank, and that R. M. Whitney himself attended the meetings of the Board, when the fact of my absence was recorded." He produced a large bundle of letters, written by him, and addressed to him, at Washington, which established the fact of his presence there beyond all possibility of doubt. He also showed, by the testimony of many witnesses, that no transaction of the kind described so minutely by the wretched Whitney had ever occurred. "Thus," said the Minority Report, "was this artfully devised story, which was intended to blast the reputation of a high-minded and honorable man, through one of those extraordinary interpositions by which Providence sometimes confounds the contrivances of the wicked, made to recoil upon the head of its inventor, who must for ever stand forth as a blasted monument of the speedy and retributive justice of Heaven."

So blinded, however, was General Jackson to all moral distinctions by his intense hostility to the bank, that he continued to countenance this Whitney; welcomed him to the presidential mansion, and lent a greedy ear to his tales of bank corruption, which were then the surest passport to presidential favor.

Mr. Adams intimates, at the conclusion of his report, that, so completely had the investigation vindicated the bank, Colonel Richard M. Johnson, one of General Jackson's special adherents and associates, rose and declared that he "had seen nothing in the conduct of the president and directors inconsistent with the purest honor and integrity." Colonel Johnson, however, was an easy, good-natured man, and was persuaded to sign the report of the majority. He never

would have been Vice-President if he had not. Mr. Adams concluded his report with these words : “ Had that same candid and explicit declaration, due, as the subscriber believes, to the most rigorous justice, been made by the other members who sanctioned the majority report, many a painful remark in the paper now submitted, perhaps the whole paper itself, would have been suppressed. But to vindicate the honor of injured worth is, in his opinion, among the first of moral obligations ; and, in concluding these observations, he would say to every individual of the House, and to every fellow-citizen of the nation, inquisitive of the cause of any over-anxious sensibility to imputations upon the good name of other men which they may here find—

“ When truth and virtue an affront endures,  
The offense is mine, my friend, and should be yours.”

The bill re-chartering the Bank of the United States passed the Senate on the eleventh of June, by a vote of twenty-eight to twenty, and the house on the third of July, by a vote of one hundred and nine to seventy-six. It was presented to the President on the fourth of July, and by him returned to Congress, VETOED, on the tenth of the same month. The message accompanying the vetoed bill was one of the longest and one of the most adroit ever sent to Congress by a President. It shows that the President, when he gave to Mr. Amos Kendall an appointment in the treasury, knew well what he was doing.

The objections of the administration to the renewal of the bank charter, as expressed in this famous message, may be summed up in one ugly word, and that word is MONOPOLY.

Here, said the President (in effect), is a certain small body of men and women, the stockholders of the bank of the United States, upon whom the federal government has bestowed, and by the renewal bill proposes to continue, exclusive privileges of immense pecuniary value ; and, by doing so, restricts the liberty of all other citizens. This is a monopoly. The granting of it, in the first place, inasmuch as the effect

of the measure could not have been foreseen, may be excused ; but for its continuance there is not the shadow of an excuse. The following odious features of the monopoly were enumerated in the message :

1. Eight millions of the stock of the bank was held by foreigners. The renewal of the charter would raise the market value of that stock at least twenty or thirty per cent. Renew the charter, and the American republic will make a present to foreign stockholders of some millions of dollars, without deriving the slightest advantage from the munificent gift.

2. Let it be granted that the government should bestow this monopoly. Then a fair price should be paid for it. The actual value of the privileges conferred by the bill is computed to be seventeen millions of dollars, and the act proposes to sell those privileges for the annual sum of two hundred thousand dollars ; or, in other words, for three millions of dollars, payable in fifteen annual installments of two hundred thousand dollars each.

3. The act excludes competition. Persons of wealth and respectability had offered to take a charter on terms more favorable to the government than those proposed by the bill.

4. The bill concedes to banks dealing with the bank of the United States what it denies to individuals. If a State bank in Philadelphia owes money to the bank of the United States, and has notes issued by the St. Louis branch, it can pay its debt with those notes ; but a merchant must either sell his St. Louis notes at a discount, or send them to St. Louis to be cashed. This boon to banks operates as a bond of union among the banking institutions of the whole country, "erecting them into an interest separate from that of the people."

5. The stock held by foreigners can not be taxed, a fact which gives such stock a value ten or fifteen per cent. greater than that held by citizens.

6. As each State can tax only the amount of stock held

the City Bank alone, on the endorsement of Mr. A. L. Stewart ; that we had a large similar accommodation for nearly two years from this one institution ; that in consequence of our favorable opinions of the United States' Bank, they made us pay up every penny of our accommodation, and threw out our note with Mr. Stewart's endorsement ; that the Manhattan and National Banks pursued the same course ; and that, in consequence, we were cut off from our usual resources of obtaining those accommodations to which the amount of our capital employed, and the extent of our business entitled us, and which we surely did not sacrifice by publishing a newspaper. We were literally proscribed by our local institutions. I went to Philadelphia, and gave to Mr. Biddle a full and perfect history of our paper, and asked for a loan of \$20,000. It was granted."

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*Answer.* I have, verbally, with Mr. Clayton, and in the presence of Mr. Cambreleng. I have also told different individuals of it immediately after it occurred, as well as at various times since.

*Question by Mr. Adams.* Did you go to Mr. Clayton without any previous solicitation?

*Answer.* I had received a letter from Colonel Benton, informing me he had recommended Judge Clayton to me.

*Question by Mr. Biddle, the President of the Bank.* Where did the alleged conversation between you, Mr. Wilson, and Mr. Andrews, take place?

*Answer.* In the area of the banking room, not far from the first teller's desk. These gentlemen, one or both of them, went with me to the teller's desk. I made the memorandum of the cash there, and my memorandum of the notes I made at the discount clerk's desk; one or both of them went with me to the discount clerk's desk, and there I made my memorandum of the notes. Mr. Burtis was, I think, the discount clerk. I can not say whether I directed the entries on the books of the loans before I went to the discount clerk. I gave the direction to both Mr. Wilson and Mr. Andrews, if both were present, or to but one, if only one was present. I stated to you the particulars I had learned, as stated in the memorandum. You did not deny them. *You colored up a good deal.* I can not say whether there was any person who could have overheard this conversation, but I presume not. I can not say whether or not I have had any conversation with them since; I think it probable I have, as I do not know how else I learned that the item of bills receivable related to these transactions.

At the moment, Mr. Biddle, astounded at this damning testimony, could only deny that it contained one syllable of truth. Shortly after, however, he proved to the committee,

by evidence the most incontestible, that (to use his own language), "on the very day when R. M. Whitney swears that he conversed with me in this room at Philadelphia, where we are now sitting—for many days before that day, and for many days after that day—I *was actually in the city of Washington*. The first evidence is the original minutes of the bank, by which it will be seen, that, from the 22d day of May to the 1st of June, I was absent from the bank, and that R. M. Whitney himself attended the meetings of the Board, when the fact of my absence was recorded." He produced a large bundle of letters, written by him, and addressed to him, at Washington, which established the fact of his presence there beyond all possibility of doubt. He also showed, by the testimony of many witnesses, that no transaction of the kind described so minutely by the wretched Whitney had ever occurred. "Thus," said the Minority Report, "was this artfully devised story, which was intended to blast the reputation of a high-minded and honorable man, through one of those extraordinary interpositions by which Providence sometimes confounds the contrivances of the wicked, made to recoil upon the head of its inventor, who must for ever stand forth as a blasted monument of the speedy and retributive justice of Heaven."

So blinded, however, was General Jackson to all moral distinctions by his intense hostility to the bank, that he continued to countenance this Whitney; welcomed him to the presidential mansion, and lent a greedy ear to his tales of bank corruption, which were then the surest passport to presidential favor.

Mr. Adams intimates, at the conclusion of his report, that, so completely had the investigation vindicated the bank, Colonel Richard M. Johnson, one of General Jackson's special adherents and associates, rose and declared that he "had seen nothing in the conduct of the president and directors inconsistent with the purest honor and integrity." Colonel Johnson, however, was an easy, good-natured man, and was persuaded to sign the report of the majority. He never

would have been Vice-President if he had not. Mr. Adams concluded his report with these words: "Had that same candid and explicit declaration, in, as the subscriber believes, so the most rigorous justice, been made by the other members who sanctioned the majority report, many a painful remark in the paper now submitted, perhaps the whole paper itself, would have been suppressed. But to vindicate the honor of injured worth is, in his opinion, among the first of moral obligations: and, in concluding these observations, he would say to every individual of the House, and to every fellow-citizen of the nation, inquisitive of the cause of any over-anxious sensibility to imputations upon the good name of other men which they may here find—

"When truth and virtue an affront endure,

The offense is mine, my friend, and should be yours."

The bill re-chartering the Bank of the United States passed the Senate on the eleventh of June, by a vote of twenty-eight to twenty, and the house on the third of July, by a vote of one hundred and nine to seventy-six. It was presented to the President on the fourth of July, and by him returned to Congress, VETOED, on the tenth of the same month. The message accompanying the vetoed bill was one of the longest and one of the most adroit ever sent to Congress by a President. It shows that the President, when he gave to Mr. Amos Kendall an appointment in the treasury, knew well what he was doing.

The objections of the administration to the renewal of the bank charter, as expressed in this famous message, may be summed up in one ugly word, and that word is MONOPOLY.

Here, said the President (in effect), is a certain small body of men and women, the stockholders of the bank of the United States, upon whom the federal government has bestowed, and by the renewal bill proposes to continue, exclusive privileges of immense pecuniary value; and, by doing so, restricts the liberty of all other citizens. This is a monopoly. The granting of it, in the first place, inasmuch as the effect



of the measure could not have been foreseen, may be excused ; but for its continuance there is not the shadow of an excuse. The following odious features of the monopoly were enumerated in the message :

1. Eight millions of the stock of the bank was held by foreigners. The renewal of the charter would raise the market value of that stock at least twenty or thirty per cent. Renew the charter, and the American republic will make a present to foreign stockholders of some millions of dollars, without deriving the slightest advantage from the munificent gift.

2. Let it be granted that the government should bestow this monopoly. Then a fair price should be paid for it. The actual value of the privileges conferred by the bill is computed to be seventeen millions of dollars, and the act proposes to sell those privileges for the annual sum of two hundred thousand dollars ; or, in other words, for three millions of dollars, payable in fifteen annual installments of two hundred thousand dollars each.

3. The act excludes competition. Persons of wealth and respectability had offered to take a charter on terms more favorable to the government than those proposed by the bill.

4. The bill concedes to banks dealing with the bank of the United States what it denies to individuals. If a State bank in Philadelphia owes money to the bank of the United States, and has notes issued by the St. Louis branch, it can pay its debt with those notes ; but a merchant must either sell his St. Louis notes at a discount, or send them to St. Louis to be cashed. This boon to banks operates as a bond of union among the banking institutions of the whole country, "erecting them into an interest separate from that of the people."

5. The stock held by foreigners can not be taxed, a fact which gives such stock a value ten or fifteen per cent. greater than that held by citizens.

6. As each State can tax only the amount of stock held

in the interest and for the benefit of the State. The bill will operate honestly and justly.

7. Through nearly a third of the stock of the Bank is held by individuals & companies living in some of the most important of the States of the Union. Of the twenty-five directors, five are appointed by the Government and twenty by the stockholders. Stock is continually being added, and the removal of the charter will greatly accelerate its departure. The Government will eventually be to throw the control of the Bank into the hands of a few resident stockholders, who will be able to reflect themselves from year to year, and who will wield a power dangerous to the institutions of the country.

8. Should the stock ever pass principally into the hands of the subjects of a foreign country, and we should become involved in a war with that country, the interests and feelings of the directors will be opposed to those of their countrymen. "All the operations of the Bank within would be in aid of the hostile fleets and armies without. Controlling our currency, receiving our public moneys, and holding thousands of our citizens in dependence, it would be more formidable and dangerous than the naval and military power of the enemy." If we must have a Bank, every consideration of sound policy, and every impulse of American feeling, admonishes that it should be purely American. And this the more, as domestic capital was so abundant, that competition in subscribing to a local bank had recently almost led to a riot.

From this enumeration, the Message proceeded to discuss the question of the constitutionality of the bill. A preliminary remark excited great clamor at the time. "Each public officer," said the President, "who takes an oath to support the Constitution, swears that he will support it *as he understands it*, and not as it is understood by others:" even though those "others" be the Judges of the Supreme Court of the United States. "The opinion of the Judges has no more authority over Congress than the opinion of Congress has over the Judges; and, on that point, the President is

independent of both." The Judges, it was true, had decided the law incorporating the Bank to be constitutional, but only on the general ground that Congress had power "to make all laws which shall be necessary and proper" for carrying the powers of the general government into execution. Necessary and proper! The question, then, resolved itself into an inquiry whether such an institution as this bill proposed was necessary and proper. To that inquiry the author of the Message addressed himself; arriving, of course, at the conclusion that the act contained many provisions most unnecessary and most improper; and, therefore, unconstitutional.

The Message, which displayed throughout the marks both of ability and earnest conviction, concluded with the following admirable words—words that Edward Livingston learned to use in the old days when Thomas Jefferson was the republican leader, and himself a young convert to his immortal principles:

"Distinctions in society will always exist under every just government. Equality of talents, of education, or of wealth, can not be produced by human institutions. In the full enjoyment of the gifts of heaven and the fruits of superior industry, economy, and virtue, every man is equally entitled to protection by law. But when the laws undertake to add to these natural and just advantages, artificial distinctions, to grant titles, gratuities, and exclusive privileges, to make the rich richer and the potent more powerful, the humble members of society, the farmers, mechanics, and laborers, who have neither the time nor the means of securing like favors to themselves, have a right to complain of the injustice of their government. There are no necessary evils in government. Its evils exist only in its abuses. If it would confine itself to equal protection, and, as heaven does its rains, shower its favors alike on the high and the low, the rich and the poor, it would be an unqualified blessing. In the act before me, there seems to be a wide and unnecessary departure from these just principles.

"Nor is our government to be maintained, or our Union preserved, by invasion of the rights and powers of the several States. In thus attempting to make our general government strong, we make it weak. Its true strength consists in leaving individuals and States, as much as possible, to themselves; in making itself felt, not in its power, but in its beneficence, not in its control, but in its protection, not in binding the States more closely to the center, but leaving each to move unobstructed in its proper orbit.

“Experience should teach us wisdom. Most of the difficulties our government now encounters, and most of the dangers which impend over our Union, have sprung from an abandonment of the legitimate objects of government by our national legislation, and the adoption of such principles as are embodied in this act. Many of our rich men have not been content with equal protection and equal benefits, but have besought us to make them richer by act of Congress. By attempting to gratify their desires, we have, in the results of our legislation, arrayed section against section, interest against interest, and man against man, in a fearful commotion which threatens to shake the foundations of our Union. It is time to pause in our career, to review our principles, and, if possible, revive that devoted patriotism and spirit of compromise which distinguished the sages of the revolution, and the fathers of our Union. If we can not at once, in justice to the interests vested under improvident legislation, make our government what it ought to be, we can, at least, take a stand against all new grants of monopolies and exclusive privileges, against any prostitution of our government to the advancement of the few at the expense of the many, and in favor of compromise and gradual reform in our code of laws and system of political economy.

“I have now done my duty to my country. If sustained by my fellow-citizens, I shall be grateful and happy ; if not, I shall find, in the motives which impel me, ample grounds for contentment and peace. In the difficulties which surround us, and the dangers which threaten our institutions, there is cause for neither dismay nor alarm. For relief and deliverance let us firmly rely on that kind Providence which, I am sure, watches with peculiar care over the destinies of our Republic and on the intelligence and wisdom of our countrymen. Through *His* abundant goodness, and *their* patriotic devotion, our liberty and Union will be preserved.”

Concerning the financial and legal principles laid down in this important document, financiers and lawyers differ in opinion. The humbler office of the present chronicler is to state that the bank-veto message of President Jackson came with convincing power upon a majority of the people of the United States. It settled the question. And it may be safely predicted that while that message endures, and the Union, as it is now constituted, endures, a bank of the United States can never exist. If ever it should be seriously proposed to establish one again, that message will rise from its grave in the volume of presidential messages, where it sleeps forgotten, to crush the proposition.

It was the singular fortune of the bank-veto message to delight equally the friends and the foes of the bank. The opposition circulated it as a campaign document! Duff Green published it in his extra *Telegraph*, calling upon all the opponents of the administration to give it the widest publicity, since it would damn the administration wherever it was read. The *New York American* characterized it thus: "It is indeed and verily beneath contempt. It is an appeal of ignorance to ignorance, of prejudice to prejudice, of the most unblushing partisan hostility to the obsequiousness of partisan servility. No man in the cabinet proper will be willing to share the ignominy of preparing or approving such a paper."

Nicholas Biddle himself was enchanted with it, for he thought it had saved the bank by destroying the bank's great enemy. "You ask," he wrote to Henry Clay, "what is the effect of the veto? My impression is, that it is working as well as the friends of the bank and of the country could desire. I have always deplored making the bank a party question, but since the President will have it so, he must pay the penalty of his own rashness. As to the veto message, I am delighted with it. It has all the fury of a chained panther, biting the bars of his cage. It is really a manifesto of anarchy, such as Marat or Robespierre might have issued to the mob of the Faubourg St. Antoine; and my hope is, that it will contribute to relieve the country from the dominion of these miserable people. You are destined to be the instrument of that deliverance, and at no period of your life has the country ever had a deeper stake in you. I wish you success most cordially, because I believe the institutions of the Union are involved in it."

So little did Mr. Biddle, and such as he, know the country in which they lived! As little do such now know it!

There was rare speaking in the Senate after the reception of the veto. Mr. Webster opened the debate upon it in a ponderous speech, which foretold the direst consequences to the country unless the people, at the approaching election,

reversed the President's decision. Mr. Clay followed in one of his most energetic harangues, which brought him into personal collision with Col. Benton. Benton, it must be owned, made some telling hits in replying to Mr. Clay. The veto, said the Kentuckian, has grown obsolete in England; and even in France, its frequent exercise by Louis XVI. caused the gay Parisians to dub him with the derisive name of *Monsieur Veto*. True, said Benton. But what was the nature of the laws which that unfortunate king had annulled by his veto? "One was the decree against the emigrants, dooming to death and confiscation of estate every man, woman, and child who should attempt to save their lives by flying from the pike, the guillotine, and the lamp-post. The other was a decree exposing to death the ministers of religion who could not take an oath which their consciences repulsed. To save tottering age, trembling mothers, and affrighted children from massacre—to save the temples and altars of God from being stained by the blood of his ministers—were the sacred objects of those vetoes; and was there anything to justify a light or reproachful allusion to them in the American Senate? The king put his constitutional vetoes to these decrees; and the *canaille* of Saint Antoine and Marceau—not the gay and laughing Parisians, but the bloody *canaille*, instigated by leaders more ferocious than themselves—began to salute the king as *Monsieur Veto*, and demand his head for the guillotine. And the queen, when seen at the windows of her prison, her locks pale with premature white, the effect of an agonized mind at the ruin she witnessed, the *poissardes* saluted her also as *Madame Veto*; and the Dauphin came in for the epithet of the Little Veto. And now, why this allusion? What application of its moral? Surely it is not pointless; not devoid of meaning and practical application. We have no bloody guillotines here, but we have political ones: sharp axes falling from high, and cutting off political heads! Is the service of that ax invoked here upon 'General Andrew Veto?' If so, and the invocation should be

successful, then Andrew Jackson, like Louis XVI., will cease to be in any body's way in their march to power."

Mr. Clay said that the veto had placed the friends of the President in an agonizing dilemma. "Their condition," said he, "reminds me of the fable invented by Dr. Franklin, of the eagle and the cat. The eagle pounced from his lofty flight in the air, upon a cat, taking it to be a pig. Having borne off his prize, he quickly felt most painfully the claws of the cat thrust deeply into his sides and body. While flying, he held a parley with the supposed pig, and proposed to let go his hold if the other would let him alone. No, says puss, you brought me from yonder earth below, and I will hold fast to you until you carry me back ; a condition to which the eagle readily assented."

"Well," said Benton, "and what is the application of the fable ?" "General Jackson is the eagle ; the bank is the cat ; the parley is the proposition of the bank to the President to sign its charter, and it will support him for the presidency—if not, will keep its claws stuck in his sides. But, Jackson, different from the eagle with his cat, will have no compromise, or bargain with the bank. One or the other shall fall ! and be dashed to atoms ! !"

Col. Benton complained of Mr. Clay's indecorous mode of speaking of the President, which, he said, was the more improper, as Mr. Clay was a rival candidate for the suffrages of the people. This remark led to a most pointed and angry colloquy between the two Senators.

Mr. Clay said : "There are some peculiar reasons why I should not go to that Senator for my views of decorum, in regard to my bearing toward the chief magistrate, and why he is not a fit instructor. I never had any personal encounter with the President of the United States. I never complained of any outrages on my person committed by him. I never published any bulletins respecting his private brawls. The gentleman will understand my allusions. I never complained, that while a brother of mine was down on the ground, senseless or dead, he received another blow. I have never made

any declarations like these relative to the individual who is President. There is also a singular prophecy as to the consequences of the election of this individual which far surpasses in evil foreboding whatever I may have ever said in regard to his election. I never made any prediction so sinister, nor made any declaration so harsh as that which is contained in the prediction to which I allude. I never declared my apprehension and belief that if he were elected, we should be obliged to legislate with pistols and dirks by our side.\*

Col. Benton replied: "It is true, sir, that I had an affray with General Jackson, and that I did complain of his conduct. We fought, sir; and we fought, I hope, like men. When the explosion was over, there remained no ill will on either side. No vituperation or system of petty persecution was kept up between us. Yes, sir, it is true, that I had the personal difficulty which the Senator from Kentucky has had the delicacy to bring before the Senate. But let me tell the Senator from Kentucky there is no 'adjourned question of veracity' between me and General Jackson. All difficulty between us ended with the conflict; and a few months after it, I believe that either party would cheerfully have relieved the other from any peril; and now we shake hands and are friendly when we meet. I repeat, sir, that there is no 'adjourned question of veracity' between me and General Jackson, standing over for settlement. If there had been, a gulf would have separated us as deep as hell." Col. Benton declared he had never made the dirk-and-pistol prophecy quoted by Mr. Clay.

Mr. Clay denied that there was any adjourned question of veracity between himself and General Jackson. "He made," said Mr. Clay, "a certain charge (of bargain) against

\* Mr. Clay alluded to the following words attributed to Mr. Benton: "If General Jackson shall be elected, he will surround himself with a pack of political bull dogs, to bark at all who dare to oppose his measures. For myself, as I can not think of legislating with a brace of pistols in my belt, I shall, in the event of the election of General Jackson, resign my seat in the Senate, as every independent man will have to do, or risk his life and honor."



me, and he referred to witnesses to prove it. I denied the truth of the charge. He called upon his witness to prove it. I leave it to the country to say whether that witness sustained the truth of the President's allegation. The witness (Mr. Buchanan) is now on his passage to St. Petersburg, with a commission in his pocket." Mr. Clay reverted to the dirk-and-pistol remark attributed to Col. Benton. "Can you, sir," he asked, turning toward Col. Benton, "can you look me in the face, and say that you never used that language out of the State of Missouri?"

"I look, sir," replied Benton, "and repeat that it is an atrocious calumny; and I will pin it to him who repeats it here."

"Then," said Mr. Clay, "I declare before the Senate that you said to me the very words."

"False, false, false," roared Benton.

"I fling back," cried Clay, "the charge of atrocious calumny upon the Senator from Missouri."

The infuriated Senators were here called to order on all sides, and the chair compelled them to desist. Colonel Benton then said: "I apologize to the Senate for the manner in which I have spoken: but not to the Senator from Kentucky."

Mr. Clay apologized: "To the Senate I also offer an apology. To the Senator from Missouri none."

It was quite a curious coincidence, that on one of these fine mornings, when Colonel Benton was so fiercely battling for the President in the Senate chamber, the President had to submit to a surgical operation for the extraction of the bullet which he had carried in his left arm ever since the time of the Benton affray, in Nashville, twenty years before. The General laid bare his arm, grasped his well known walking stick, and told the doctor (Dr. Harris, of Philadelphia) to "go ahead." The doctor made a bold incision into the flesh, gave the arm a squeeze, and out jumped the ball upon the floor. It was all over and the arm bandaged in one minute. My informant does not state whether the General

restored the ball to its rightful owner or his representative, nor whether Colonel Benton was able to look the President comfortably in the face that evening.

On the 16th of July, at six o'clock in the morning, Congress adjourned. The opposition members went home to join their allies of the press in the attempt to convince the people of the United States that the veto was ruining the country, and would completely ruin it, unless they elected Messrs. Clay and Sergeant to the first offices of the government in the following November.

The opposition press told the people that the veto had caused the stock of the great bank to decline four per cent. ; that bricks had fallen from five dollars per thousand to three ; that wild consternation pervaded the great cities ; that real estate had lost a fourth of its value ; that western men were contracting to deliver pork, next season, at two dollars and a half if Clay was elected, and at one dollar and a half if Jackson was elected ; that mechanics were thrown out of employment by thousands, and were going supperless to bed ; that no more steamboats were to be built on the western rivers until there was a change of rulers ; that the old friends of General Jackson were falling away from him in every direction ; that mass-meetings were held in every State denouncing the veto ; that the Irish voters were seceding from General Jackson, thousands of them at one meeting ; and that the defeat of the tyrant was as certain to occur as the sun was certain to rise on the morning of election day.

## CHAPTER XXXI.

## RE-ELECTION OF GENERAL JACKSON.

A STRANGE, sad, exciting, eventful summer was that of 1832.

It opened gayly enough. The country had never been under such headway before. In looking over the newspapers for May of that year, the eye is arrested by the incident of Washington Irving's triumphal return home after an absence from his native land of seventeen years. He had gone away an unknown youth, or little known beyond his own circle, and came back a renowned author who had won as much honor for his country as for himself. The little speech which he delivered at the banquet given him in the city of New York, delightfully reveals the innocent astonishment which the young Republic, once so fearful of its future, felt at the mighty pace at which it seemed to be going toward greatness. The modest Irving, unused to speak in public, spoke with faltering voice of his warm and unexpected welcome. But when he came to describe the changes he observed in his native city, the marvelous prosperity that every where met his eyes, his tongue was loosened, and he burst into momentary eloquence.

"From the time," said he, "that I approached the coast, I saw indications of the growing greatness of my native city. We had scarce descried the land, when a thousand sails of all descriptions gleaming along the horizon, and all standing to or from one point, showed that we were in the neighborhood of a vast commercial emporium. As I sailed up our beautiful bay, with a heart swelling with old recollections and delightful associations, I was astonished to see its once wild features brightening with populous villages and noble piles, and a teeming city extending itself over heights which I had left covered with groves and forests. But how shall I describe my emotion when our city itself rose to sight, seated in the

midst of its watery domain, stretching away to a vast extent ; when I beheld a glorious sunshine brightening up the spires and domes, some familiar to memory, others new and unknown, and beaming on a forest of masts of every nation, extending as far as the eye could reach. I have gazed with admiration upon many a fair city and stately harbor, but my admiration was cold and ineffectual, for I was a stranger, and had no property in the soil. Here, however, my heart throbbed with pride and joy as I admired. I had birthright in the brilliant scene before me—

‘ This was my own, my native land.’

“ It has been asked, ‘ Can I be content to live in this country ?’ Whoever asks that question must have but an inadequate idea of its blessings and delights. What sacrifice of enjoyments have I to reconcile myself to ? I come from gloomier climates to one of brilliant sunshine and inspiring purity. I come from countries lowering with doubt and danger, where the rich man trembles and the poor man frowns—where all repine at the present and dread the future. I come from these, to a country where all is life and animation ; where I hear on every side the sound of exultation ; where every one speaks of the past with triumph, the present with delight, the future with growing and confident anticipation. Is this not a community in which one may rejoice to live ? Is this not a city by which one may be proud to be received as a son ? Is this not a land in which every one may be happy to fix his destiny and ambition, if possible to found a name ? I am asked how long I mean to remain here. They know but little of my heart or my feelings who can ask me this question !—As long as I live.”

Just so the country felt as it read Mr. Irving’s glowing sentences in the month of May, 1832.

Before the next month had run its course, a great terror pervaded the continent. The cholera, that had ravaged Europe last year, and spread over America a vague alarm, broke

out in Quebec on the ninth of June. An emigrant ship lost forty-two of her passengers from the disease while crossing the ocean, and seemed to communicate it to the city as soon as she arrived. Swiftly the disease made its southward progress—swiftly, but capriciously—leaping here a region, diverging there, sparing some unhealthful localities, and desolating others supposed to be peculiarly salubrious. It reached New York fifteen days after its appearance in Quebec. There was no parade on the fourth of July. Hospitals were hastily prepared in every ward. The cases increased in number for just one month ; at the expiration of which three hundred persons daily sickened, and nearly one hundred died, of cholera alone. Grass grew in some of the thoroughfares usually thronged, and whole blocks of stores were closed. By the middle of August, when 2,565 persons had died of the disease, it had so far subsided that the people who had fled began to return, and the city to regain its wonted aspect.\*

As the epidemic subsided in New York, it gained further South. It raged in Philadelphia, terrified Baltimore, threatened Washington, and darted malignant influences into the far West. Cincinnati was attacked, and the troops stationed at unknown Chicago did not escape. New Orleans had it, instead of the yellow fever.

As a vulture, brooding in the air, invisible, discerns its prey afar off, and swooping downward seizes it in its horrid talons, unexpected, irresistible, and then, having torn the blood out of its heart, ascends again to the upper air, and surveying once more the outspread land, espies another help-

\* The following paragraph is from the *New York Journal of Commerce* of July 26th, 1832: "There never was a more delightful exhibition of Christian benevolence than is now witnessed in this city. The generous donations which have been recorded, and which still continue to flow in, form but an item in the general aggregate. Numbers of our most accomplished ladies are engaged, day after day, in making garments for the poor and distressed, while committees of gentlemen, who at home sit on elegant sofas and walk on Brussels carpets, are searching out the abode of poverty, filth, and disease, and administering personally to the wants of the wretched inmates. There is no telling the misery which they often meet with and relieve."

less victim, and rushes down upon it, so did this wayward and terrible cholera seem to select, from day to day, for no reasons that science could penetrate, a fresh town to suddenly affright and desolate.

About the middle of August, the President, accompanied by Mr. Blair and other friends, left Washington for a visit to the Hermitage, and did not return until the nineteenth of October. On this journey it was remarked the President paid his expenses in gold. "No more paper-money, you see, fellow-citizens, if I can only put down this Nicholas Biddle and his monster bank." A telling maneuver in a country of doubtful banks and counterfeit-detectors, distressing to all women, and puzzling to most men. "Ninety-five counterfeits of the bills of the bank of the United States alone," Col. Benton had kept the country in mind of during the late debates. Gold, long since gone out of circulation, was held up to the people as the currency which the administration of General Jackson was struggling to restore. A golden piece of money, as most of us remember, was a curiosity at that time. It was a distinction in country places to possess one. Clay and eternal rag-money, Jackson and speedy gold, was diligently represented to be the issue between the two candidates. Storekeepers responded by announcing themselves as anti-bank hatters, and hard-money bakers. The administration had given the politicians a "good cry" to go before the country with, and it was not allowed to fall to the ground.

Amid the terrors of the cholera, one would have expected to find the presidential campaign carried on with less than the usual spirit. There was a lull in midsummer. But, upon the whole, no contest of the kind was ever conducted with so much energy and so much labor. The pamphlets of the campaign still astonish collectors by their number, their ability, and their size. Against the administration seem to have been arrayed the talent of the country, the great capitalists, the leading men of business, and even the smaller banks, making common cause with the great bank, doomed to quick

extinction if General Jackson were reëlected. Let us note briefly a few instructive incidents of the contest.

At the last moment, it appears, there was some reason to fear that the machinery devised to secure the nomination of Mr. Van Buren would fail to effect its purpose. Among those who objected to place him upon the ticket with General Jackson was that very Major Eaton for whom he had done and risked so much. Eaton was a delegate from Tennessee to the nominating convention. Major Lewis writes to me: "Mr. Eaton objected to the nomination of Mr. Van Buren, alleging that it would endanger the election of General Jackson. I had not seen Mr. Eaton for five or six months; but learning, only the day before the convention was to meet, that he would oppose the nomination of Mr. Van Buren, I immediately wrote him in strong and decided terms, warning him of the danger of such a course, *unless he was prepared to quarrel with the General!* He was sent as a delegate from Tennessee, and went directly to Baltimore, where the convention was to sit, the evening before it was to meet, without passing through Washington as was expected; but fortunately he received my letter in time to save both himself and Mr. Van Buren, perhaps."

The convention met, as Messrs. Lewis, Hill, Blair, and Kendall had decreed it should meet, at Baltimore on the 21st of May. Three hundred and twenty-six delegates were present. The General's old friend, Judge Overton, of Tennessee, was to have presided over the assembly, but was prevented from doing so by sickness. The convention soon came to a vote upon the candidates for the second office. Mr. Van Buren received two hundred and sixty votes; Mr. P. P. Barbour, of Virginia, forty; Col. Richard M. Johnston, twenty-six. The opposition noticed, with comment, that this convention adjourned without deigning to issue the usual address to the people.

The plan of the Calhoun wing of the democratic party, if wing it could be called, and if it had a plan, was explained, at the time, by General Duff Green to one of the friends of

Mr. Clay, and by Mr. Clay to his nearest friend, Judge Brooke, of Maryland. It was a wild scheme, or seems such to us who coolly scan it at this distance of time. "Duff explained fully the views and wishes of the Calhoun party. These are, that his name shall, in the course of the ensuing summer (say August), be presented as a candidate; that, if no ticket is run in Virginia by our friends, and if they will co-operate with his, he can obtain the vote of that State; that, with a fair prospect of receiving the vote of Virginia, he will obtain those also of North Carolina, Georgia, and South Carolina, and probably of Alabama and Mississippi; that the result would be to defeat the reelection of General Jackson, and to devolve the election on the House; that there they suppose I would be elected; and that they would be satisfied with my election. I have neither said nor done any thing in reply to all this, to commit my friends or myself. I could not, without dishonor, have ventured upon any sort of commitment of them. They are, in fact, free, and so I wish them to remain, to act according to their own sense of propriety."

A coalition between the leader of the nullifying free-traders and the champion of the protective system would have been an astonishing conjunction, indeed. And Mr. Clay does not appear to object to it on the ground of its incongruity. He proceeds to ask Judge Brooke whether the thing could be done, and if done, whether it would achieve the end desired of ousting Jackson and finishing the public career of Van Buren. The two factions, so irreconcilably opposed in principle, had already coalesced to reject the nomination of Mr. Van Buren; and the well-informed Dr. Hammond, in his "Political History of New York," intimates that, at the same time, the subsequent compromise between nullification and protection was substantially agreed upon. Let us not, however, get beyond our depth. Suffice it here to say that the scheme of running Mr. Calhoun, so as to throw the election into the House, was not attempted, and that the forces of the opposition, except the anti-masonry party, were concentrated upon Messrs. Clay and Sergeant.



The anti-masonry party, which had nominated Mr. Wirt for the presidency, and Mr. William Ellnaker, of Pennsylvania, for the vice-presidency, was a noisy and earnest party, but proved to have little power except in two localities, western New York and Vermont.

The grounds upon which the opposition rested their case against the administration need not be repeated here. Most of them will occur to the reader.

We support General Jackson, said the friends of the administration, because he has restored the government to the principles of Jefferson ; because he has stayed the corrupt and unconstitutional expenditure of the public money for internal improvements designed for the benefit of localities ; because he has waged war upon that gigantic and overshadowing monopoly, the bank of the United States ; because on the tariff he stands between the two dangerous extremes of free trade and prohibition, and counsels moderation and compromise ; because, in less than two years from the beginning of his administration, the trade to the West Indies, which had been lost by the mismanagement of that which preceded it, was again opened to the United States, on terms of reciprocity ; because, within the same period, treaties of the utmost importance and difficulty have been negotiated with Denmark, Turkey, and France ; because the dispute on the subject of boundaries on our eastern frontier has been brought to an issue by an award advantageous to the United States ; because our relations with every portion of the world are harmonious, and the United States never stood higher in the respect of the world than at this moment ; because Andrew Jackson, himself sprung from the people, and in heart-felt sympathy with them, is the champion and defender of the people against monopolies, bank aristocrats, gambling stockholders, and all others who prey upon the earnings of the farmer and mechanic.

The opposition, in waging this important contest, relied chiefly upon banquets, speeches, pamphlets, newspapers, and caricatures. Caricatures, poorly designed and worse executed,

were published in great numbers in the course of the season. A favorite idea of the caricaturists was to depict Mr. Van Buren as an infant in the arms of General Jackson, receiving sustenance from a spoon in the hand of the General. One popular picture represented the President receiving a crown from Mr. Van Buren and a scepter from the devil. Another showed the President raving at a delegation. Another gave Clay and Jackson in the guise of jockeys, riding a race toward the White House—Clay half a length a head. Another represented Jackson, Van Buren, Benton, Blair, Kendall, and others, attired as burglars, aiming a huge battering-ram at the bank's impregnable front door. Another portrayed General Jackson as Don Quixote, tilting at one of the huge pillars of the same marble edifice, and breaking his puny lance against it.

The other party made great use of transparencies, processions, and hickory poles. M. Chevalier, a French gentleman then traveling in the United States, gives an amusing account of the Jackson processions. They were so frequent that the traveler was led to suppose them one of the institutions of the country. "Besides the camp-meetings," he says, "the political processions are the only things in this country which bear any resemblance to festivals. The party dinners, with their speeches and deluge of toasts, are frigid, if not repulsive ; and I have never seen a more miserable affair than the dinner given by the Opposition ; that is to say, by the middle class, at Powelton, in the neighborhood of Philadelphia. But I stopped involuntarily at the sight of the gigantic hickory poles which made their solemn entry on eight wheels, for the purpose of being planted by the democracy on the eve of the election. I remember one of these poles, with its top still crowned with green foliage, which came on to the sound of fifes and drums, and was preceded by ranks of democrats, bearing no other badge than a twig of the sacred tree in their hats. It was drawn by eight horses, decorated with ribbons and mottoes. Astride on the tree itself were a dozen Jack-

son men of the first water, waving flags with an air of anticipated triumph, and shouting '*Hurra for Jackson!*'

"But this entry of the hickory was but a by-matter compared with the procession I witnessed in New York. It was nearly a mile long. The democrats marched in good order, to the glare of torches; the banners were more numerous than I had ever seen them in any religious festival; all were in transparency, on account of the darkness. On some were inscribed the names of the democratic societies or sections: *Democratic young men of the ninth or eleventh ward*; others bore imprecations against the Bank of the United States; *Nick Biddle* and *Old Nick* here figured largely. Then came portraits of General Jackson afoot and on horseback; there was one in the uniform of a general, and another in the person of the Tennessee farmer, with the famous hickory cane in his hand. Those of Washington and Jefferson, surrounded with democratic mottoes, were mingled with emblems in all tastes and of all colors. Among these figured an eagle, not a painting, but a real, live eagle, tied by the legs, surrounded by a wreath of leaves, and hoisted upon a pole, after the manner of the Roman standards. The imperial bird was carried by a stout sailor, more pleased than ever was a sergent permitted to hold one of the strings of the canopy, in a Catholic ceremony. From further than the eye could reach, came marching on the democrats. I was struck with the resemblance of their air to the train that escorts the *viaticum* in Mexico or Puebla. The American standard-bearers were as grave as the Mexican Indians who bore the sacred tapers. The democratic procession, also, like the Catholic procession, had its halting-places; it stopped before the houses of the Jackson men to fill the air with cheers, and halted at the doors of the leaders of the Opposition, to give three, six, or nine groans. If these scenes were to find a painter, they would be admired at a distance, not less than the triumphs and sacrificial pomps which the ancients have left us delineated in marble and brass; for they are not mere grotesques after the manner of Rembrandt—they belong to history, they

partake of the grand ; they are the episodes of a wondrous epic which will bequeath a lasting memory to posterity, that of the coming of democracy.”\*

Betting upon the result of the elections was in great vogue this year, and for several years after. We have seen Mr. Clay and Mr. Van Buren amicably betting a suit of

\* The following may seem, and is, a very nonsensical anecdote. Those who can remember the excitement of 1832, will not consider it altogether misplaced here. It is, moreover, an illustration of “universal suffrage:” “During General Jackson’s second presidential campaign there flourished at the Quarantine Ground, Staten Island, an honest old fellow, a baker by trade, and a stanch democrat withal. One evening a political meeting was held at a small tavern which then stood on the shore road, a short distance east of the present Pavilion at New Brighton. Our good friend, and several other residents at the Quarantine, attended the meeting. Among them was old Dr. H., who was a noted wag, and it occurred to him that if a speech could be got out of the old baker it would be exceedingly amusing. Accordingly, he called on him for an address.

“‘No, no,’ said the baker; ‘I can make bread, but I can’t make speeches.’

“The suggestion, however, had excited the audience, and the old man was at length compelled to make the effort. So, rising in his seat, he said:

“‘Feller-citizens: it is well known to you all that when John Quincy Adams was President, the Emperor of Brazil seized several of our ships, and wouldn’t let ’em come home. So President Adams wrote him a letter, and a very *purty* letter it was, too—for to give him his due, he knew how to write, if he didn’t know any thing else. So the Emperor he got the letter, and, after he had read it, he asked who this Adams was? and his head men told him he was President of the United States. “Well, well,” says the Emperor, “he wants me to send them ships home, but I won’t do it; for it is quite plain to me that a man who can write so beautiful, don’t know any thing about fighting; so the ships must stay where they are.” Well,’ continued the baker, ‘by-and-by Ginral Jackson got to be President, and he wrote a letter to the Emperor, and it was something lik this:

“““You Emperor, send them ships home right away.

“““ANDREW JACKSON.”

““Well, the Emperor got that letter too, and after he had read it, he laughed, and said, “This is a mighty queer letter! Who is this Jackson? ’Pears to me I’ve heerd of him before.” “We’ll tell you,” said his head men, “who he is. He is the New Orleans Jackson.” “What!” said the Emperor, “the New Orleans Jackson: That’s quite another matter. If this man don’t write so beautiful, he knows how to fight; so send them ships home right away.” And it was done.’

“This was regarded as a very effective political speech, and was received with thunders of applause.”—*Harper’s Magazine*.

clothes upon an election. Members of Congress were generally given to the practice. The minor office-holders sought to show their confidence in the success of their party, and to intimidate the opposition, by the extravagance of their bets. Isaac Hill writes to Jesse Hoyt in October: "To meet the braggarts of the opposition I advise my friends that any sum will be safe on the electoral vote of Pennsylvania and New York." Mr. William L. Mackenzie computed, from the evidence of letters, that Jesse Hoyt's election bets amounted in nine years to one hundred and twenty thousand dollars. The letters of Mr. John Van Buren, published a few years ago by Mr. Mackenzie, give us a curious insight into the mysteries of election betting. Note these sentences:

"Can you get any bets on Governor, even? We shall lick the dogs so in this State that the 'Great West' will hear the howling." . . . "Can you get bets on three, four, and five thousand majority for Marcy, two hundred dollars on each?—if not, I will bet five hundred dollars on four thousand—perhaps, if we lose New Jersey, you can get this. If you can't do better, I should like a bet of three hundred dollars on five thousand majority for Marcy—unless we lose New Jersey: in that event I will wait to get better terms." . . . "I should be most particularly obliged to you, if you can get me an even bet against Marcy to any amount less than five thousand dollars. I think I would bet one hundred dollars on each one thousand majority up to five thousand. I would bet fifteen hundred dollars against one thousand dollars on an even election. I consider Marcy's election, by from seven thousand five hundred to fifteen thousand majority, as sure as God." . . . "P. S. I don't care to bet on five thousand majority for Marcy just now: if it is not too late to back out." . . . "In this State our majority will range from fifteen thousand to twenty-five thousand. Bets on fifteen are perfectly safe." . . . "By the looks of Webb's paper (although it is intended no doubt to operate on New Jersey) the opposition gain confidence. Can you tempt them with a wager on three, four, and five thousand majorities—two hundred dollars on each—or five hundred dollars on four thousand? If neither of these can be got to-morrow, bet them five hundred dollars on five thousand majority. There will be no betting after to-morrow." . . . "They say 'the blood of the martyrs is the seed of the Church,' and heaven knows I have been freely tapped in the good cause."

One other feature of this campaign remains to be noticed.

Both parties were confident of victory ; but if one party was more confident than the other, it was the opposition. The reason of this was, that the printed matter relating to the controversy, with which the country was inundated, was mostly on the side of the opposition. Reading people, themselves under the domination of the printing press, could not but attach great importance to this circumstance. Reading people are not now all aware that not more than one half of the voters of this Union can be reached by print, and that no party that chiefly relies upon the press can carry a general election. A striking pamphlet can influence voters, and so does a well-conducted newspaper ; but a hickory pole, a taking cry, a transparency, a burst of sky rockets and Roman candles (alas ! that it should be so !) have a potency over a large third of our voters that printed eloquence can not exert.

An event occurred at the close of the month of August that served to complete the infatuation of the party opposed to General Jackson. The *Courier and Enquirer*, so long the sturdy and influential champion of the administration, turned against it, removed the names of Jackson and Van Buren from the head of its editorial columns, and openly joined the opposition. “ Since 1823,” said Col. Webb, in the course of an explanatory article of three columns, “ I have been the firm, undeviating friend of Andrew Jackson, through good and through evil report. I have defended his reputation and advocated his cause ; and for the last five years my exertions in his behalf, as the conductor of a public journal, have been known to this community. But the time has now arrived when I owe it to the people, to the institutions of the country, and to myself, to declare my deliberate conviction that he has not realized the high hopes which his reputation and previously written and declared opinions promised, nor redeemed the sacred pledges which he voluntarily gave on his elevation to the first station in the world. Let me not be misunderstood. I do not—I never will—impeach his patriotism or his integrity ; but as a sentinel at my post, true to the duty which I voluntarily assumed when I became the

editor of a public journal, I feel called upon to proclaim to the people that Andrew Jackson is not their president ; that, enfeebled by age, and the toils, cares, and anxieties of an active and laborious life, he no longer possesses his former energy of character or independence of mind ; but confiding in those who have wormed themselves into his confidence, he has intrusted the affairs of this great nation, and the happiness of thirteen millions of freemen, to the hands of political gamblers, money-changing, time-serving politicians, who, in the pursuit of their unhallowed purposes, threaten ruin to the country and to that sacred charter of our liberties which was matured by the wisdom of our fathers, after having been purchased with their blood, and the sacrifice of every selfish motive on the altar of public good. The events of the past three years, the occurrences which are almost daily transpiring, the high-handed infringements of the Constitution, and the tone of the official paper at Washington, all but too clearly prove that a few mercenary and unprincipled officers of government, possessing the confidence of the Executive, and leagued with a band of reckless money-changers at Albany, are bringing disgrace and distress upon the country, and destroying the fairest fabric of liberty which an all-wise and beneficent Providence ever bestowed upon man."

Colonel Webb soon had an opportunity of learning whether or not General Jackson possessed his "former energy of character." He was mistaken in attributing General Jackson's late anti-bank measures to the influence of others. General Jackson's animosity to the bank had supplanted in his mind, for the time, all his other animosities. Only four of his confidential counselors, Messrs. Benton, Taney, Blair, and Kendall, were prepared to sustain him in all the measures he had taken, and all the measures he contemplated, against it. Major Lewis held back. A majority of the Cabinet gave him but a cold and hesitating support, and one important member thereof was known to be a friend of the bank. The President needed no stimulant in his warfare against an institution, to destroy which was as much his rul-

ing passion in 1832, as it had been, in 1815, his ruling passion to drive the British army into the sea. The bank had defied him in 1829. The bank had ignored him in 1831. Perish the bank! The United States was not a country large enough to contain two such presidents as Andrew Jackson and Nicholas Biddle.

The defection of the great newspaper had its influence upon the press. Eight papers, if we may believe the opposition editors, soon followed its example.

A few weeks later, the *American* dolorously exclaimed: "The city is lost! The returns from the country come in all one way! There is no doubt that Jackson and Van Buren are elected!"

The result of the election astonished every body. Not the wildest Jackson man in his wildest moment had anticipated a victory quite so overwhelming. Two hundred and eighty-eight was the whole number of electoral votes in 1832. General Jackson received two hundred and nineteen—seventy-four more than a majority. Mr. Van Buren, for the vice-presidency, received one hundred and eighty-nine electoral votes—forty-four more than a majority. Clay and Sergeant obtained FORTY-NINE! William Wirt, of Maryland, and William Ellnaker, of Pennsylvania, the candidates of the anti-masonry party, received the electoral vote of one State, Vermont—a result to which the vehement denunciations of a printer's boy, named Horace Greeley, may have contributed a few votes. South Carolina threw her vote away upon John Floyd, of Virginia, and Henry Lee, of Massachusetts, neither of whom were nullifiers.

The States that voted for General Jackson were these: Maine, New Hampshire, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Virginia, North Carolina, Georgia, Tennessee, Ohio, Louisiana, Mississippi, Indiana, Illinois, Alabama, and Missouri—sixteen. All of these States but one gave their electoral vote to Mr. Van Buren for the vice-presidency. Pennsylvania preferred William Wilkins for that office, one of her own citizens, who received accordingly thirty votes, and



caused Mr. Van Buren to fall thirty votes behind his chief. The States that gave a majority for Clay and Sergeant were : Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, Delaware, Maryland, and Kentucky—six.

How can we explain a result so unexpected ? First, General Jackson, in his leading public measures (always excepting his appointment-and-removal policy) was RIGHT. Secondly, Society, in all countries and all ages, by the nature of things, is divided into three classes, Top, Bottom, and Middle—kings, lords, and commons—the three estates—Office-Holders, Capitalists, and Workingmen—call them what you will. Any two of these is more than a match for any one of them. In Europe, the despot unites with the masses, and sways the scepter in safety. Or, he unites with the nobles, and the people must submit. The nobles and the people together can put down the despot. In the election of 1832, the President of the United States supported by the masses of the people, repeated, on this republican theater, a triumph supposed to belong only to the history of the Old World.

The Bank of the United States was doomed. The *Globe* had the audacity to say, soon after the election, that members of the defeated party were prompting the “minions of the bank” to save the institution by the only expedient that could save it—the assassination of the President ! It further stated, that two members of the Opposition had been overheard to declare, that the man who should do the deed would render his country a signal service, which the bank would gladly reward with a gift of fifty thousand dollars. There was one man then living in the United States who believed that there was truth in these stories. Andrew Jackson was his name. When, a little later, a lunatic aimed a pistol at him, he thought for days that the “minions of the bank” had set him on.

The present Emperor of France witnessed part of this contest between the President of the Republic and the President of the Bank. From an allusion to it in the “*Idées Napoléoniennes*,” we must infer that Napoleon III. was a Jack-

son man at that day. "The United States," observes the imperial author, "offer us a striking example of the inconveniences which attend the weakness of a civil authority. Although, in that country, there are none of the fermentations of discord, which for a long time yet will trouble Europe, the central power, being weak, is alarmed at every independent organization ; for every independent organization threatens it. It is not military power alone which is feared ; but money power—the bank : hence a division of parties. The president of the bank might have more power than the President of the country ; for a much stronger reason, a successful general would eclipse the civil power."

Well, the clamor of the election, the shouts of triumph, the groans of the defeated, died away in the month of November, and were forgotten. The President, it will be admitted, was a very popular man just then. But who could have foreseen that, within one little month, he was to win over to his side, the very class and the only class that had opposed his reelection, and attain a popularity more fervid and universal than has been incurred by a citizen of the United States since the first term of General Washington's presidency ? Who could have expected to see all New England, headed by New England's favorite, Daniel Webster, joining with all the North and most of the South, in one burst of enthusiastic praise of Andrew Jackson ?

Indeed, some of the newspapers went so far as to nominate General Jackson for a third term. "My opinion is," wrote Mr. Wirt, "that he may be President for life if he chooses."

## CHAPTER XXXII.

## NULLIFICATION AS AN IDEA.

“A RENDERING void and of no effect, or of no legal effect,” is the definition given by Noah Webster of this word, nullification. It was introduced into American politics as early as 1798, when the passage of the odious Alien and Sedition laws prompted the Legislatures of Virginia and Kentucky to adopt certain resolutions known to history as the Resolutions of '98, of which Mr. Madison and Mr. Jefferson were the chief authors. One of these resolutions declared that when the general government assumed powers not delegated by the States, “a nullification of the act was the rightful remedy.” The resolutions declared, however, that the act nullified must be “so palpably against the constitution as to amount to an undisguised declaration that the compact is not meant to be the measure of the powers of the general government, but that it will proceed to exercise over the States all powers whatsoever, by seizing the rights of the States, and consolidating them in the hands of the general government.” The authors of the resolutions contemplated a concurrence with the act of nullification by other States, or by all the States. Their object, evidently, was to provide for a united protest against usurpation, and, if necessary, for united action against it. The resolutions were drawn and passed by men who loved the union of these States. They were drawn and passed in the interest of the Union, for the sake of the Union, to cement the Union, to avert danger from the Union, to provide a way of restoring the Union if it should ever be threatened with dissolution.

The interpretation put upon the Resolutions of '98 by the Nullifiers of 1832 was this : Any single State may nullify any act of Congress which it deems unconstitutional. Mr. Calhoun contended that such nullification was not an act tending to dissolve the Union, but, on the contrary, to

strengthen it. Every thing else could go on as before. The nullifying State merely refused obedience to *one* objectionable act, and would wait patiently for Congress to repeal it. The extreme nullifiers, the men of that party who had honest minds, boldly avowed that the resolutions of 1798 meant that *any State of this Union may secede from the Union whenever it likes!* And this is the real meaning of the nullification doctrines of 1832. The language of Mr. Calhoun, guarded and labored as it is, amounts to that, and nothing short of that. He proposed the nullification of a revenue law, and a revenue law *must* be universal in its operation or it can not any where be obeyed. He contemplated a posture of affairs which rendered it necessary for the Union to obey South Carolina, or for South Carolina to give laws to the Union.

What, then, of the Supreme Court, the appointed arbiter between State and State, between a State and the United States? Why, said Mr. Calhoun, the Supreme Court is as much the creature of a Majority as Congress itself; and the very object of nullification is to resist the encroachments of tyrant Majority. The Supreme Court is *already committed to the side of the stronger*, to which stronger the judges owe their offices; and, therefore, can not justly be allowed a voice in the matter. Lest any one should find it impossible to believe, without the evidence, that a man of Mr. Calhoun's force and ability could deliberately utter such sentiments, I will insert here the curious paragraph from his first formal utterance upon nullification, which disposes of the Supreme Court. The italics are Mr. Calhoun's :

"It is an universal and fundamental political principle, that the power to protect can safely be confided only to those interested in protecting, or their responsible agents, a maxim not less true in private than in public affairs. The danger in our system is, that the General Government, which represents the interests of the whole, may encroach on the States, which represent the peculiar and local interests, or that the latter may encroach on the former. In examining this point, we ought not to forget that the government, through all its departments, judicial as well as others, is ad-

ministered by delegated and responsible agents ; and that *the power which really controls ultimately all the movements is not in the agents, but those who elect or appoint them.* To understand, then, its real character, and what would be the action of the system in any supposable case, we must raise our view from the mere agents to this high controlling power which finally impels every movement of the machine. By doing so, we shall find all under the control of the will of a majority, compounded of the will of the majority of the people of the States estimated in federal numbers. These united constitute the real and final power, which impels and directs the movements of the General Government. The majority of the States elect the majority of the Senate ; of the people of the States, that of the House of Representatives ; the two united, the President ; and the President and a majority of the Senate appoint the Judges ; a majority of whom, and a majority of the Senate and the House with the President, really exercise all of the powers of the government, with the exception of the cases where the Constitution requires a greater number than a majority. The Judges are, in fact, as truly the Judicial Representatives of this united majority, as the majority of Congress itself, or the President is its legislative or executive representative ; and to confide the power to the Judiciary to determine, finally and conclusively, what powers are delegated and what reserved, would be in reality to confide it to the majority, whose agents they are, and by whom they can be controlled in various ways ; and, of course, to subject (against the fundamental principle of our system and all sound political reasoning) the reserved powers of the States, with all of the local and peculiar interests they were intended to protect, to the will of the very majority against which the protection was intended. Nor will the tenure by which the Judges hold their office, however valuable the provision in many other respects, materially vary the case. Its highest possible effect would be to *retard* and not *finally* to *resist*, the will of a dominant majority."

Of course it would. And the belief is, and has always been prevalent in the United States, that the majority *ought* to be the ruling power in the republic.

The comment of General Jackson upon this reasoning is about the best which the discussion elicited. "If this thing goes on," he exclaimed to his old courier, General Sam. Dale, of Mississippi, "our country will be like a bag of meal with both ends open. Pick it up in the middle or endwise, it will run out." A homely and forcible summing up of the Websterian argument.

It behoves every citizen of the United States to understand this subject of nullification. And never was there more need that it should be generally understood than in the year 1860. So much of it as relates to General Jackson and his administration, I will now proceed to elucidate as clearly as I can.

Every Southerner who has visited the North, and every Northerner who has traveled in the South, has been struck with the contrast exhibited in the general aspect of the two sections. The Northerner who finds himself, for the first time, in the heart of a Southern State, surveys the scene around him with astonishment. He is told that the country upon which he looks has been settled for a hundred or a hundred and fifty years ; but he beholds all the signs which, in his own section, denote a new settlement. He is amazed at the apparent fewness of the people, at the vast quantities of wild or worn out lands, at the dilapidated tenements, at the air of desolation which pervades the scene. The villages are few and far between, and present a contrast the most complete to the trim, tidy, clean, well-shaded, delightful villages of his northern home. If he alights and mingles among the people, and, particularly, if he resides for a while upon a plantation, he discovers that his first impressions were not altogether correct. He learns that there is at the South a certain substantial prosperity, not indicated by the general appearance of the country. But he also perceives that such prosperity as there is, is shared by a comparatively small portion of the people. Young men without capital or influential friends do not find there that variety of employments, those chances to rise, which gives to every kind of northern talent such a stimulus to exertion. The stranger finds himself regarding the amiable young men whom he meets with a kind of compassionate curiosity. He wonders what they are going to do in life. Between those colossal estates there does not seem any room for a young fellow to edge in and make his way. The professions, too, offer less inducement there than else-

where, owing to the general smallness of the towns and the thinness of the country population.

A fine old Virginia gentleman, one of the olden time, who has inherited a fine estate, finds life at the South sufficiently pleasant, no doubt. But to unfriended, uncapitaled, aspiring young men, the class whose energy and ambition make the North what it is, the South does not offer a tempting sphere of exertion.

The contrast between the slow and limited prosperity of the South, and the swift, noisy, marvelous progress of the North, was never so striking as it was during the administration of General Jackson. The North was rushing on like a western high-pressure steamboat, with rosin in the furnace and a man on the safety-valve. All through western New York, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, the primeval wilderness was vanishing like a mist, and towns were springing into existence with a rapidity that rendered necessary a new map every month, and spoiled the gazetteers as fast as they were printed. The city of New York, as Mr. Irving has beautifully told us, began already to feel itself the London of the New World, and to calculate how many years must elapse before it would be the London of the universe.

The South, meanwhile, was depressed and anxious. Cotton was down. Tobacco was down. Corn, wheat, and pork were down. For several years the chief products of the South had either been inclining downward, or else had risen in price too slowly to make up for the (alleged) increased price of the commodities which the South was compelled to buy. Few new towns changed the Southern map. Charleston languished, or seemed to languish; certainly did not keep pace with New York, Boston, and Philadelphia. No Cincinnati of the South became the world's talk by the startling rapidity of its growth. No Southern river exhibited, at every bend and coyne of vantage, a rising village. No Southern mind, distracted with the impossibility of devising suitable names for a thousand new places per annum, fell back in despair upon the map of the old world, and selected at





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“As I was one evening in company with sundry Nullifiers, one of them related the following:

“‘I am very particular,’ said he, ‘never to use an article of American manufacture on any consideration whatever. It costs me a great deal more, to be sure, to obtain those of foreign production. But I am determined not to encourage the advocates of protection; and would sooner go fifty miles, and pay a hundred per cent. more than a thing is worth, if it be only imported, than have a similar article of American manufacture brought to my very door and sold at a fair price.

“‘But in spite of all my care, I sometimes get confoundedly taken in.

random any convenient name that presented itself, bestowing upon clusters of log-huts such titles as Utica, Rome, Palermo, Naples, Russia, Egypt, Madrid, Paris, Elba, and Berlin. No Southern commissioner, compelled to find names for a hundred streets at once, had seized upon the letters of the alphabet and the figures of arithmetic, and called his avenues A, B, C, and D, and instead of naming his cross streets, numbered them.

Upon the fact of this contrast between the North and South, all the earlier nullification debates turned. Mr. Clay struck the key-note when he began his three days' speech upon the tariff in 1832, with a glowing picture of the prosperity of the country. Southern gentlemen replied, particularly Mr. John Tyler, of Virginia, that Mr. Clay's eloquent periods applied only to one section of the Union. The North, it was true, was bounding forward on a bright career, but the South was paralyzed and desolate. Northern members could not deny the essential truth of the Southerners' lamentation. It was respecting the CAUSE of the contrast that the debaters differed.

The cause, the cause, ye most chaste stars ! How could any man, at that day, look upon the South and not see the cause ? The Southern system, be it wrong or be it right, be it wise or be it unwise, is one that does not attract emigrants ; and the Northern system does ! That is the great cause.

From the hour when Columbus sprang exulting upon these western shores, the great interest of America has been emigration. That country of the new world has prospered most which has attracted the greatest number of the best emigrants, by affording them the best chance to attain the sole object of emigration, the improvement of their condition ; and that portion of that country has out-stripped the rest which offered to emigrants the most promising field of labor. For, a MAN, view him in what light you may, is the most precious thing in the world. He is wealth in its most concentrated form. A stalwart, virtuous, skillful, thoughtful



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A retort appeared at the North, which was more than equal in humor and point to the “Memoirs of a Nullifier.” It was entitled, “A Yankee among the Nullifiers.” The following amusing passage is full of the feeling of the hour :

“As I was one evening in company with sundry Nullifiers, one of them related the following:

“‘I am very particular,’ said he, ‘never to use an article of American manufacture on any consideration whatever. It costs me a great deal more, to be sure, to obtain those of foreign production. But I am determined not to encourage the advocates of protection; and would sooner go fifty miles, and pay a hundred per cent. more than a thing is worth, if it be only imported, than have a similar article of American manufacture brought to my very door and sold at a fair price.

“‘But in spite of all my care, I sometimes get confoundedly taken in.

Why, it was only last week that I discovered a monstrous cheat that had been put upon me. Falling into conversation with a Yankee, I launched out as usual against the Tariff, and swore that I would go bareheaded and barebacked till the end of time, sooner than I would wear a coat made of American cloth, or a hat manufactured in an American shop.

“ ‘ With that the fellow poked out his hand and desired, if it was no offense, to examine the quality of my coat. “ You may examine it as much as you please,” said I; “ but you ’ll find it ’s none of your Yankee manufacture ?”

“ ‘ “ There ’s where your mistaken, Mister,” said he. “ I helped make that cloth myself at the Pontoosuc Factory, in old Barkshire, Massachusetts.”

“ ‘ “ The devil you did !” said I. “ Why, I purchased this cloth of a merchant who assured me positively that it was of British manufacture. But what makes you think it is American cloth, and especially that it was made at the Pon——, what do you call it, Factory ?”

“ ‘ “ Why, I know by the feel of it. Any fool might know that.”

“ ‘ He then made a like request—provided always it was no offense—to examine my hat. “ You are devilish afraid of giving offense,” said I, at the same time handing him my hat; “ but at all events you ’ll not find that of American manufacture. It ’s real London made. I paid ten dollars for it to the importer.”

“ ‘ “ The more fool you, then,” said he; “ why, I made that hat with my own hands, in the town of Danbury, Connecticut; and I can buy as many jest like it as you can shake a stick at, for four dollars apiece.”

“ ‘ “ Confound you, for a lying Yankee !” said I, beginning to get angry at the fellow’s impertinence—“ do you pretend to be a hatter and cloth manufacturer too? But here’s sufficient evidence, inside of the hat, to convict you of an untruth; here’s the name of the manufacturer, Bondstreet, London.”

“ ‘ “ Ha! ha! ha!” said he, laughing in my face—“ I printed that label in Hartford, Connecticut.”

“ ‘ “ You Yankee scoundrel !” said I, “ what hav’nt you done ?”

“ ‘ “ I never did so foolish a thing,” replied he, “ as to pay twice as much for British manufactures as I have to give for American ones; and after all, find the goods had been made in the workshops of our own country.”

“ ‘ This capped the climax of the fellow’s impertinence; and I kicked him out doors for his pains.’ ”

Here, then, was material upon which the great nullifier could work—the discontent of the South with the protective system, and the popular antipathy between the two sections of the Union. It proved an explosive material in his hands.



## CHAPTER XXXIII.

## NULLIFICATION AS AN EVENT.

CALHOUN began it. Calhoun continued it. Calhoun stopped it.

So much is known. But the means are not accessible, and are not likely to be, of forming a certain judgment respecting the character of this celebrated person. We can not positively determine whether he was a selfish, or merely a mistaken man ; or, in other words, whether it was the love of the presidency, or of justice and South Carolina, that impelled him.

The old Jackson men of the inner set still speak of Mr. Calhoun in terms which show that they consider him at once the most wicked and the most despicable of American statesmen. He was a coward, conspirator, hypocrite, traitor, and fool, say they. He strove, schemed, dreamed, lived, only for the presidency ; and when he despaired of reaching that office by honorable means, he sought to rise upon the ruins of his country—thinking it better to reign in South Carolina than to serve in the United States. General Jackson lived and died in this opinion. In his last sickness he declared that, in reflecting upon his administration, he chiefly regretted that he had not had John C. Calhoun executed for treason. “My country,” said the General, “would have sustained me in the act, and his fate would have been a warning to traitors in all time to come.”

It is painful to be compelled to think ill of a character beloved by the people of one State, admired by the people of many States, generally respected in all the States. Bulwer and others have maintained that we can not learn a man's character from his writings. Perhaps not, when his writings are imaginative and emotional, because such effusions do not tell the secret of secrets—whether the good feelings of the author have power to control his conduct. A man of the

right stamp lives better than he writes : a man of the wrong stamp writes better than he lives. The writings of Mr. Calhoun, voluminous, argumentative, difficult to read, seem to reveal to us an honest, earnest nature. We should naturally infer from them that, soured in some degree by his disappointment with regard to the presidency, he had fallen under the domination of one idea, which he spent his last years in promulgating, and of which he seemed to die. We also learn from those who associated familiarly with him that he was personally the most amiable, gracious, and even fascinating of men. The pages of the Senate-chamber liked to serve him. The reporters of the Washington press were fond of him. His neighbors in South Carolina loved him. It was only his equals and rivals, Clay, Jackson, Crawford, and the rest, who hated him ; and they *did* hate him most cordially. And I am bound to state that, after long holding out against their view of his character, a close survey of his political career has compelled me to doubt both his patriotism and his sincerity. I can not reconcile some of his important actions with the usual theory that he was a pure, but mistaken man. I can not resist the conclusion that it was the mania for the presidency (which has led so many promising spirits to their damnation) that inspired all his later efforts. It does really seem that from the hour when public men feel themselves to be on the road to the presidential mansion—that whited sepulchre of all that is best in human nature—they all, in some degree, cease to be worthy of themselves. They take on board, as it were, and stow away in the hold of their souls a huge magnet, which pulls the needle of conscience all awry. If only those candidates for the presidency who have passed that tremendous ordeal without just reproach throw stones at Mr. Calhoun's memory, his good name is safe.

But let us come to the facts. The war of 1812 left the country burthened with a debt of one hundred and thirty millions of dollars, and blessed with a great number of small manufactories. The debt and the manufactories were both

results of the war. By cutting off the supply of foreign manufactured articles, the war had produced upon the home manufacturing interest the effect of a prohibitory tariff. To pay the interest of this great debt and occasional installments of the principal, it was necessary for the government to raise a far larger revenue than had ever before been collected in the United States. The new manufacturing interest asked that the duties should be so regulated as to afford some part of that complete protection which the war had given it. The peace, that had been welcomed with such wild delight in 1815, had prostrated entire branches of manufacture to which the war had given a sudden development.

Among those who advocated the claims of the manufacturers in the session of 1815-'16, and strove to have the protective principle permanently incorporated into the revenue legislation of Congress, the most active, the most zealous, was John C. Calhoun, member of the House of Representatives from South Carolina. He spoke often on the subject, and he spoke unequivocally. Mr. Clay, who was then the friend, ally, and messmate of Mr. Calhoun, admitted that the Carolinian had surpassed himself in the earnestness with which he labored in the cause of protection.

One of his arguments was drawn from the condition of Poland at the time. "The country in Europe," said he, "having the most skillful workmen, is broken up. It is to us, if wisely used, more valuable than the repeal of the Edict of Nantes was to England. She had the prudence to profit by it—let us not discover less political sagacity. Afford to ingenuity and industry immediate and AMPLE PROTECTION, and they will not fail to give a preference to this free and happy country."

The protectionists, led by Messrs. Clay and Calhoun, triumphed in 1816. In the tariff bill of 1820, the principle was carried farther, and still farther in those of 1824 and 1828. Under the protective system, manufactures flourished, and the public debt was greatly diminished. It attracted skillful

workmen to the country, as Mr. Calhoun had said it would, and contributed to swell the tide of ordinary emigration.

But, about the year 1824, it began to be thought, that the advantages of the system were enjoyed chiefly by the Northern States, and the South hastened to the conclusion that the protective system was the cause of its lagging behind. There was, accordingly, a considerable southern opposition to the tariff of 1824, and a general southern opposition to that of 1828. In the latter year, however, the South elected to the presidency General Jackson, whose votes and whose writings had committed him to the principle of protection. Southern politicians felt that the General, as a southern man, was more likely to further their views than Messrs. Adams and Clay, both of whom were peculiarly devoted to protection.

As the first years of General Jackson's administration wore away without affording to the South the "relief" which they had hoped from it, the discontent of the southern people increased. Circumstances gave them a new and most telling argument. In 1831, the public debt had been so far diminished as to render it certain that in three years, the last dollar of it would be paid. The government had been collecting about twice as much revenue as its annual expenditures required. In three years, therefore, there would be an annual surplus of twelve or thirteen millions of dollars. The South demanded, with almost a united voice, that the duties should be reduced so as to make the revenue equal to the expenditure, and that, in making this reduction, the principle of protection should be, in effect, abandoned. Protection should thenceforth be "incidental" merely. The session of 1831-'2 was the one during which southern gentlemen hoped to effect this great change in the policy of the country. The President's Message, as we have seen, also announced that, in view of the speedy extinction of the public debt, it was high time that Congress should prepare for the threatened Surplus.

The case was one of real difficulty. It was a case for a

statesman. No *body* of men ever assembled could have disposed of it without doing injury to some important interest. To reduce the revenue thirteen millions, at one fell and indiscriminate swoop, would close half the workshops in the country. At the same time, for the United States to go on raising thirteen millions a year more than was necessary for carrying on the government, would have been an intolerable absurdity.

Mr. Clay, after an absence from the halls of Congress of six years, returned to the Senate in December, 1831—an illustrious figure, the leader of the opposition, its candidate for the Presidency, his old renown enhanced by his long exile from the scene of his well-remembered triumphs. The galleries filled when he was expected to speak. He was in the prime of his prime. He never spoke so well as then, nor as often, nor so long, nor with so much applause. But he either could not, or dared not, undertake the choking of the Surplus. What wise, complete, far-reaching measure *can* a candidate for the presidency link his fortunes to? He treated it as he did a certain “lion” in 1819, mentioned in a previous volume. He wounded, without killing it; and he was *compelled*, at a later day, to do what it had been glorious voluntarily to attempt in 1832. He proposed merely “that the duties upon articles imported from foreign countries, and not coming into competition with similar articles made or produced within the United States, be forthwith abolished, except the duties upon wines and silks, and that those be reduced.” After a debate of months’ duration, a bill in accordance with this proposition passed both Houses, and was signed by the President. It preserved the protective principle intact; it reduced the income of the government about three millions of dollars; and it inflamed the discontent of the South to such a degree, that one State, under the influence of a man of force, became capable of—Nullification.

The President signed the bill, as he told his friends, because he deemed it an approach to the measure required. His influence, during the session, had been secretly exerted in

favor of compromise. Major Lewis, at the request of the President, had been much in the lobbies and committee-rooms of the capitol, urging members of both sections to make concessions. The President thought that the just course lay between the two extremes of abandoning the protective principle and of reducing the duties in total disregard of it.

“ You must yield something on the tariff question,” said Major Lewis to the late Governor Marcy, of New York, “ or Mr. Van Buren will be sacrificed.”

Said Governor Marcy in reply : “ I am Mr. Van Buren’s friend, but the protective system is more important to New York than Mr. Van Buren.”

To return to Mr. Calhoun. His hostile correspondence with the President was published by him, as we have before stated, in the spring of 1831. The President retorted by getting rid of the three members of the cabinet who favored the succession of Mr. Calhoun to the presidency. Three months after, in the *Pendleton Messenger* of South Carolina, Mr. Calhoun continued the strife by publishing his first treatise upon nullification. As there was no obvious reason for such a publication at that moment, the Vice-President began his essay by giving a reason for it. “ It is one of the peculiarities,” said he, “ of the station I occupy, that while it necessarily connects its incumbent with the politics of the day, it affords him no opportunity officially to express his sentiments, except accidentally on an equal division of the body over which he presides. He is thus exposed, as I have often experienced, to have his opinions erroneously and variously represented. In ordinary cases, the correct course I conceive to be to remain silent, leaving to time and circumstances the correction of misrepresentations ; but there are occasions so vitally important, that a regard both to duty and character would seem to forbid such a course ; and such I conceive to be the present. The frequent allusions to my sentiments will not permit me to doubt that such, also, is the public conception, and that it claims the right to know, in relation to the question referred to, the opinions of those who hold impor-

tant official stations ; while, on my part, desiring to receive neither unmerited praise nor blame, I feel, I trust, the solicitude which every honest and independent man ought, that my sentiments should be truly known, whether they be such as may be calculated to recommend them to public favor or not. Entertaining these impressions, I have concluded that it is my duty to make known my sentiments ; and I have adopted the mode which, on reflection, seemed to be the most simple, and best calculated to effect the object in view."

The essay, which fills five columns of the *Courier and Enquirer*, is divided into two parts. First, the Vice-President endeavors to show that nullification is the natural, proper, and peaceful remedy for an intolerable grievance inflicted by Congress upon a State or upon a section ; secondly, that the tariff law of 1828, unless rectified during the next session of Congress, will be such a grievance. He went all lengths against the protective principle. It was unconstitutional, unequal in its operation, oppressive to the South, an evil "inveterate and dangerous." The reduction of duties to the revenue standard could be delayed no longer "without the most distracting and dangerous consequences." "The honest and obvious course is, to prevent the accumulation of the surplus in the treasury, by a timely and judicious reduction of the imposts ; and thereby to leave the money in the pockets of those who made it ; and from whom it can not be honestly nor constitutionally taken, unless required by the fair and legitimate wants of the government. If, neglecting a disposition so obvious and just, the government should attempt to keep up the present high duties, when the money was no longer wanted, or to dispose of this immense surplus by enlarging the old, or devising new schemes of appropriations ; or, finding that to be impossible, it should adopt the most dangerous, unconstitutional, and absurd project ever devised by any government, of dividing the surplus among the States (a project which, if carried into execution, could not fail to create an antagonist interest between the States and General Government, on all questions of appropriations,

which would certainly end in reducing the latter to a mere office of collection and distribution), either of these modes would be considered by the section suffering under the present high duties, as a fixed determination to perpetuate forever what it considers the present unequal, unconstitutional, and oppressive burden ; *and, from that moment, it would cease to look to the general government for relief.*"

Nullification is distinctly announced in this passage. It seems to be again announced, as a thing inevitable, in the concluding words of the essay : " In thus placing my opinions before the public, I have not been actuated by the expectation of changing the public sentiment. Such a motive, on a question so long agitated, and so beset with feelings of prejudice and interest, would argue, on my part, an insufferable vanity, and a profound ignorance of the human heart. To avoid, as far as possible, the imputation of either, I have confined my statements on the many and important points on which I have been compelled to touch, to a simple declaration of my opinion, without advancing any other reasons to sustain them than what appeared to me to be indispensable to the full understanding of my views. With every caution on my part, I dare not hope, in taking the step I have, to escape the imputation of improper motives ; though I have without reserve freely expressed my opinions, not regarding whether they might or might not be popular. I have no reason to believe that they are such as will conciliate public favor, but the opposite ; which I greatly regret, as I have ever placed a high estimate on the good opinion of my fellow-citizens. But, be this as it may, I shall at least be sustained by feelings of conscious rectitude. I have formed my opinions after the most careful and deliberate examination, with all the aids which my reason and experience could furnish ; I have expressed them honestly and fearlessly, regardless of their effects personally ; which, however interesting to me individually, are of too little importance to be taken into the estimate where the liberty and happiness of our country are so vitally involved."



In this performance, Mr. Calhoun did not refer to his forgotten championship of the protective policy in 1816. The busy burrowers of the press, however, occasionally brought to the surface a stray memento of that championship, which the press of South Carolina denounced as slanderous. A Mr. Reynolds, of South Carolina, was moved, by his disgust at such reminders, to write to Mr. Calhoun, asking him for information respecting "the origin of a system so abhorrent to the South." Mr. Calhoun's reply to the inquiry does not read like the letter of an honest man. It certainly conveyed impressions at variance with the truth. He said that "he had always considered the tariff of 1816 as in reality a measure of revenue—as distinct from one of protection;" that it reduced duties instead of increasing them; that the protection of manufactures was regarded as a mere incidental feature of the bill; that he had regarded its protective character as temporary, to last only until the debt should be paid; that, in fact, he had not paid very particular attention to the details of the bill at the time, as he was not a member of the committee which had drafted it; that "his time and attention were much absorbed with the question of the currency," as he was chairman of the committee on that subject; that the tariff bill of 1816 was innocence itself compared with the monstrous and unconstitutional tariff of 1828, and had no principle in common with it.

These assertions may not all be quite destitute of truth, but they are essentially false, and the impression created by them is most erroneous. The reader has but to turn to the debates of 1816, to discover that the discussion of the tariff bill turned entirely on its protective character, and that Mr. Calhoun was the special defender of its protective provisions. The strict constructionist or State rights party was headed then in the House by John Randolph, who, on many occasions during the long debate, rose to refute Mr. Calhoun's protective reasoning. Calhoun was then a member of the other wing of the republican party. He was a bank man, an internal improvement man, a protectionist, a consolidationist—

in short, a republican of the Hamiltonian school, rather than the Jeffersonian. He was strenuous in asserting, among other things, that protection would benefit the planter as much as it benefited the manufacturer. In fact, there is not a protective argument now employed by Mr. Carey or the *New York Tribune*, which can not be found in the speeches of Mr. Calhoun upon the tariff of 1816. Indeed, it was Mr. Calhoun's course on this question in 1816 which gave him that popularity in Pennsylvania which induced his friends in that State to start him for the presidency in 1824. His principal tariff speech had been printed upon a sheet, framed, hung up in bar-rooms and parlors along with the Farewell Address of General Washington. A member of Congress from Pennsylvania reminded Calhoun of this fact during the session of 1833.

Mr. Nicholas P. Trist, then of the State Department, in a series of articles in the *Richmond Inquirer*, fell upon Mr. Calhoun's Reynolds letter, and tore it to shreds. He found that (to use his own language) it contained more errors than it contained words. He copied from the old newspapers column after column of the debates of 1816, in which Mr. Calhoun figured as the most active and even enthusiastic of the protectionists. He showed that his name was associated with that of Henry Clay in the defense of the principle, and that both were frequently replied to at the same time by members of the other division of the party. These articles of Mr. Trist created what is now termed "a sensation." The President was greatly pleased with them, and had not the least difficulty in accepting Mr. Trist's conclusion, "that Mr. Calhoun was totally destitute of all regard for truth."

Mr. Calhoun's fulmination in the *Pennington Messenger* was dated July 26th, 1831. Congress met in December following, and debated the tariff all the winter and spring. Late in the month of June, by a majority of thirty-two to sixteen in the Senate, by a majority of one hundred and twenty-nine to sixty-five in the House, Mr. Clay's bill, reaffirming the protective principle, and abolishing duties on

articles not needing protection, was passed. A month after, Congress adjourned ; the Vice-President went home to South Carolina ; and that fiery little State soon prepared to execute the threats contained in the Vice-President's Pendleton manifesto.

The legislature of the State, early in the autumn, passed an act calling a convention of the citizens of South Carolina, for the purpose of taking into consideration the late action of Congress, and of suggesting the course to be pursued by South Carolina in relation to it. At Columbia, on the nineteenth of November, the convention met. It consisted of about one hundred and forty members, the élite of the State. The Hamiltons, the Haynes, the Pinckneys, the Butlers, and, indeed, nearly all the great families of a State of great families were represented in it. It was a body of men as respectable in character and ability as has ever been convened in South Carolina. Courtesy and resolution marked its proceedings, and the work undertaken by it was done with commendable thoroughness. A committee of twenty-one was appointed to draw up an address to the people of the State, or rather a programme of the proceedings best calculated to promote the end designed. The chief result of the labors of this committee was the celebrated ORDINANCE, which ordinance, signed by the entire convention, consisted of five distinct decrees, to the execution of which the members pledged themselves. It was ordained—

I. That the tariff law of 1828, and the amendment to the same of 1832, were “null, void, and no law, nor binding upon this State, its officers or citizens.”

II. No duties enjoined by that law on its amendment shall be paid, or permitted to be paid, in the State of South Carolina, after the first day of February, 1833.

III. In no case involving the validity of the expected nullifying act of the legislature, shall an appeal to the Supreme Court of the United States be permitted. No copy of proceedings shall be allowed to be taken for that purpose. Any attempt to appeal to the Supreme Court “may be dealt with

as for a contempt of the court," from which the appeal is taken.

IV. Every office-holder in the State, whether of the civil or the military service, and every person hereafter assuming an office, and every juror, shall take an oath to obey this Ordinance, and all acts of the legislature in accordance therewith or suggested thereby.

V. If the government of the United States shall attempt to enforce the tariff laws, now existing, by means of its army or navy, by closing the ports of the State, or preventing the egress or ingress of vessels, or shall in any way harass or obstruct the foreign commerce of the State, then South Carolina will no longer consider herself a member of the Federal Union : "the people of this State will thenceforth hold themselves absolved from all further obligation to maintain or preserve their political connection with the people of the other States, and will forthwith proceed to organize a separate government, and do all other acts and things which sovereign and independent States may of right do."

Such was the Nullifying Ordinance of November 24th, 1832—Mr. Calhoun's peaceful, constitutional, and union-cementing remedy for a federal grievance. The convention issued an address to the people of the other States of the Union, justifying its proceedings, and then adjourned.

The people of South Carolina accepted the Ordinance with remarkable unanimity. There was a union party in the State, respectable in numbers and character, but the nullifiers commanded an immense, an almost silencing majority. Robert Y. Hayne, a member of the convention, was elected governor of the State, and the legislature that assembled early in December, was chiefly composed of nullifiers. The message of the new governor endorsed the acts of the convention in the strongest language possible. "I recognize," said the governor, "no allegiance as paramount to that which the citizens of South Carolina owe to the State of their birth or their adoption. I here publicly declare, and wish it to be distinctly understood, that I shall hold myself bound, by the highest

of all obligations, to carry into full effect, not only the ordinance of the convention, but every act of the legislature, and every judgment of our own courts, the enforcement of which may devolve on the executive. I claim no right to revise their acts. It will be my duty to execute them ; and that duty I mean, to the utmost of my power, faithfully to perform."

He said more : " If the sacred soil of Carolina should be polluted by the footsteps of an invader, or be stained with the blood of her citizens, shed in her defense, I trust in Almighty God that no son of hers, native or adopted, who has been nourished at her bosom, or been cherished by her bounty, will be found raising a parricidal arm against our common mother. And even should she stand ALONE in this great struggle for constitutional liberty, encompassed by her enemies, that there will not be found, in the wide limits of the State, one recreant son who will not fly to the rescue, and be ready to lay down his life in her defense. South Carolina can not be drawn down from the proud eminence on which she has now placed herself, except by the hands of her own children. Give her but a fair field, and she asks no more. Should she succeed, hers will be glory enough to have led the way in the noble work of REFORM. And if, after making these efforts due to her own honor, and the greatness of the cause, she is destined utterly to fail, the bitter fruits of that failure, not to herself alone, but to the entire South, nay, to the whole Union, will attest her virtue."

The legislature instantly responded to the message by passing the acts requisite for carrying the ordinance into practical effect. The Governor was authorized to accept the services of volunteers, who were to hold themselves in readiness to march at a moment's warning. The State resounded with the noise of warlike preparation. Blue cockades, with a palmetto button in the center, appeared upon thousands of hats, bonnets, and bosoms. Medals were struck ere long, bearing this inscription : " John C. Calhoun, First President of the Southern Confederacy." The legislature proceeded

soon to fill the vacancy created in the Senate of the United States by the election of Mr. Hayne to the governorship. John C. Calhoun, Vice-President of the United States, was the individual selected, and Mr. Calhoun accepted the seat. He resigned the vice-presidency, and began his journey to Washington in December, leaving his State in the wildest ferment.

Two months of the autumn of this year, as we have before mentioned, General Jackson spent in visiting his beloved Hermitage. But he had had an eye upon South Carolina. Soon after his return to Washington in October, came news that the convention of the South Carolina nullifiers was appointed to meet on the nineteenth of November. On the sixth of that month, the President sent secret orders to the collector of the port of Charleston of an energetic character :

“ Upon the supposition that the measures of the convention, or the acts of the legislature may consist, in part, at least, in declaring the laws of the United States imposing duties unconstitutional, and null and void, and in forbidding their execution, and the collection of the duties within the State of South Carolina, you will, immediately after it shall be formally announced, resort to all the means provided by the laws, and particularly by the act of the 2d of March, 1799, to counteract the measures which may be adopted to give effect to that declaration.

“ For this purpose you will consider yourself authorized to employ the revenue cutters which may be within your district, and provide as many boats, and employ as many inspectors, as may be necessary for the execution of the law, and for the purposes of the act already referred to. You will, moreover, cause a sufficient number of officers of cutters and inspectors to be placed on board, and in charge of every vessel arriving from a foreign port or place, with goods, wares, or merchandise, as soon as practicable after her first coming within your district, and direct them to anchor her in some safe place within the harbor, where she may be secure from any act of violence, and from any unauthorized attempt to discharge her cargo before a compliance with the laws ; and they will remain on board of her at such place until the reports and entries required by law shall be made, both of vessel and cargo, and the duties paid, or secured to be paid to your satisfaction, and until the regular permit shall be granted for landing the cargo ; and it will be your duty, against any forcible attempt, to

retain and defend the custody of the said vessel, by the aid of the officers of the customs, inspectors, and officers of the cutters, until the requisitions of the law shall be fully complied with ; and in case of any attempt to remove her or her cargo from the custody of the officers of the customs, by the form of legal process from State tribunals, you will not yield the custody to such attempt, but will consult the law officer of the district, and employ such means as, under the particular circumstances, you may legally do, to resist such process, and prevent the removal of the vessel and cargo.

“ Should the entry of such vessel and cargo not be completed, and the duties paid, or secured to be paid, by bond or bonds, with sureties to your satisfaction, within the time limited by law, you will, at the expiration of that time, take possession of the cargo, and land and store the same at Castle Pinckney, or some other safe place, and in due time, if the duties are not paid, sell the same, according to the direction of the 56th section of the act of the 2d of March, 1799 ; and you are authorized to provide such stores as may be necessary for that purpose.”

A few days after the dispatch of these orders, General Scott was quietly ordered to Charleston, for the purpose, as the President confidentially informed the collector, “ of superintending the safety of the ports of the United States in that vicinity.” Other changes were made in the disposition of naval and military forces, designed to enable the President to act with swift efficiency, if there should be occasion to act.

If ever a man was resolved to accomplish a purpose, General Jackson was resolved on this occasion to preserve intact the authority with which he had been entrusted. Nor can any language do justice to the fury of his contemptuous wrath against the author and fomentor of all this trouble. The recently published autobiography of Gen. Sam. Dale, of Mississippi, contains a passage which affords us a peep into the White House when nullification was the ruling topic. Dale had distinguished himself during the New Orleans campaign as a bearer of despatches, in which capacity he had rendered General Jackson much service, and won his regard.

At the height of the nullification excitement, “ Big Sam ” found himself at the city of Washington :

"The third day, Colonel William R. King, of the Senate, brought me word that President Jackson desired to see me. 'Tell Dale,' said he to Colonel King, 'that if I had as little to do as he has, I should have seen him before now.' The General was walking in the lawn in front of his mansion as we approached. He advanced, and grasped me warmly by the hand.

" 'No introduction is needed,' said the Colonel.

" 'Oh no,' said the General, shaking my hand again, 'I shall never forget Sam Dale.' We walked into his reception-room, and I was introduced to Col. Benton, and five or six other distinguished men. They were all very civil, and invited me to visit them. They were talking over '*Nullification*,' the engrossing subject at that period, and the President, turning to me, said, 'General Dale, if this thing goes on, our country will be like a bag of meal with both ends open. Pick it up in the middle or endwise, and it will run out. I must tie the bag and save the country.' The company now took leave, but when I rose to retire with Col. King, the General detained me, ordered up some whisky, and directed his servant to refuse all visitors until one o'clock. He talked over our campaigns, and then of the business that brought me to Washington. He then said, 'Sam, you have been true to your country, but you have made one mistake in life. You are now old and solitary, and without a bosom friend or family to comfort you. God called mine away. But all I have achieved—fame, power, every thing—would I exchange if she could be restored to me for a moment.'

"The iron man trembled with emotion, and for some time covered his face with his hands, and tears dropped on his knee. I was deeply affected myself. He took two or three turns across the room, and then abruptly said, 'Dale, they are trying me here; you will witness it; but, by the God of heaven, I will uphold the laws.'

"I understood him to be referring to nullification again, his mind evidently having recurred to it, and I expressed the hope that things would go right.

" 'They SHALL go right, sir,' he exclaimed, passionately, shivering his pipe upon the table.

"He calmed down after this, and showed me his collection of pipes, many of a most costly and curious kind, sent to him from every quarter, his propensity for smoking being well known. 'These,' said he, 'will do to look at. I still smoke my corn-cob, Sam, as you and I have often done together: it is the sweetest and best pipe.'

"When I rose to take leave, he pressed me to accept a room there. 'I can talk to you at night; in the day I am beset.' I declined on the plea of business, but dined with him several times, always, no matter what dignitaries were present, sitting at his right hand. He ate very sparingly,



only taking a single glass of wine, though his table was magnificent. When we parted for the last time, he said, 'My friend, farewell; we shall see each other no more; let us meet in heaven.'

"I could only answer him with tears, for I felt that we should meet no more on earth."

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## CHAPTER XXXIV.

### NULLIFICATION EXPLODES AND TRIUMPHS.

CONGRESS met on the third of December. Mr. Calhoun had not reached Washington, and his intention to resign the vice-presidency was not known there. Judge White, of Tennessee, was elected president of the Senate, *pro tem.*, and the President of the United States was then notified that Congress was ready to receive the annual message.

The message of 1832 reveals few traces of the loud and threatening contentions amid which it was produced. It is an unusually quiet and business-like document. The ravages and the subsidence of the cholera were briefly referred to. The recall of Mr. Van Buren from England was merely mentioned as an "unexpected" and "unfortunate" circumstance, which had interrupted sundry negotiations with the English government. The income of the year would reach twenty-eight millions of dollars; the expenditures sixteen millions and a half; the payments on the public debt eighteen millions. The President was now enabled to announce that on the 1st of January, 1833, there would remain of the public debt less than seven millions, which would be extinguished early in the course of that year. "I can not," he said, "too cordially congratulate Congress and my fellow-citizens on the near approach of that memorable and happy event, the extinction of the public debt of this great and free nation. Faithful to the wise and patriotic policy marked out by the legislation of the country for this object, the present admin-

istration has devoted to it all the means which a flourishing commerce has supplied, and a prudent economy preserved, for the public treasury. Within the four years for which the people have confided the executive power to my charge, fifty-eight millions of dollars will have been applied to the payment of the public debt."

It remained, the message continued, for Congress to revise the tariff, so as to reduce the revenue to the reduced necessities of the government. This *must* be done: but so done, if possible, as not to injure the manufacturing interest. "Large interests have grown up under the implied pledge of our national legislation, which it would seem a violation of public faith suddenly to abandon. Nothing could justify it but the public safety, which is the supreme law. But those who have vested their capital in manufacturing establishments can not expect that the people will continue permanently to pay high taxes for their benefit, when the money is not required for any legitimate purpose in the administration of the government. Is it not enough that the high duties have been paid as long as the money arising from them could be applied to the common benefit in the extinguishment of the public debt?" This was not the doctrine of the first message, which contemplated a permanent surplus revenue for division among the States. The President here recommended all, or nearly all, that the nullifiers demanded.

The troubles in South Carolina were dismissed in a single paragraph, which expressed a hope of a speedy adjustment of the difficulty.

The United States Bank was not suffered to die in peace. "I recommend," said the President, "that provision be made to dispose of all stocks now held by the general government in corporations, whether created by the general or State governments, and to place the proceeds in the treasury." But this was not all. Congress was urged to institute an inquiry "whether the public deposits in that institution may be entirely safe." Rumors were abroad, said the President, im-

peaching the character of the bank, which, being widely credited, seemed to call for formal investigation.

The President now brought forward his famous recommendations respecting the public lands. They should no longer, he thought, be made a source of revenue, but should be sold to actual settlers, in limited parcels, at a price barely sufficient to pay the cost of surveying and selling, and the expenses incurred in fulfilling our compacts with the Indians. "The adventurous and hardy population of the west," observed the President, "besides contributing their equal share of taxation under our impost system, have, in the progress of our government, for the lands they occupy, paid into the treasury a large proportion of forty millions of dollars, and, of the revenue received therefrom, but a small part has been expended among them. When, to the disadvantage of their situation in this respect, we add the consideration that it is their labor alone which gives real value to the lands, and that the proceeds arising from their sale are distributed chiefly among States which had not originally any claim to them, and which have enjoyed the undivided emolument arising from the sale of their own lands, it can not be expected that the new States will remain longer contented with the present policy, after the payment of the public debt."

The President was also of opinion that the federal government should relinquish the ownership of public lands to the several States within whose borders they lay. The message contained the usual recommendation for the election of President and Vice-President by the direct vote of the people, and for limiting their time of holding office to a single term ; which last could not, of course, be omitted in view of the recent reëlection.

While Congress was listening to this calm and suggestive message, the President was absorbed in the preparation of another document, and one of a very different description. A pamphlet containing the proceedings of the South Carolina Convention reached him on one of the last days of November. It moved him profoundly ; for this fiery spirit loved his

country as few men have loved it. Though he regarded those proceedings as the fruit of John C. Calhoun's treasonable ambition and treasonable resentment, he rose, on this occasion, above personal considerations, and conducted himself with that union of daring and prudence which had given him such signal success in war. He went to his office alone, and began to dash off page after page of the memorable Proclamation which was soon to electrify the country. He wrote with that great steel pen of his, and with such rapidity, that he was obliged to scatter the written pages all over the table to let them dry. A gentleman who came in when the President had written fifteen or twenty pages, observed that three of them were glistening with wet ink at the same moment. The warmth, the glow, the passion, the eloquence of that proclamation, were produced then and there by the President's own hand.

To these pages were added many more of notes and memoranda which had been accumulating in the presidential hat for some weeks, and the whole collection was then placed in the hands of Mr. Livingston, the Secretary of State, who was requested to draw up the Proclamation in proper form. Major Lewis writes to me: "Mr. Livingston took the papers to his office, and, in the course of three or four days, brought the proclamation to the General, and left it for his examination. After reading it, he came into my room and remarked that Mr. Livingston had not correctly understood his notes—there were portions of the draft, he added, which were not in accordance with his views, and must be altered. He then sent his messenger for Mr. Livingston, and, when he came, pointed out to him the passages which did not represent his views, and requested him to take it back with him and make the alterations he had suggested. This was done, and the second draft being satisfactory, he ordered it to be published. I will add that, before the proclamation was sent to press to be published, I took the liberty of suggesting to the General whether it would not be best to leave out that portion to

which, I was sure, the State-rights party would particularly object. He refused.

"Those are my views," said he with great decision of manner, "and I will not change them nor strike them out."

This celebrated paper was dated December 11th, 1832. The word proclamation does not describe it. It reads more like the last appeal of a sorrowing but resolute father to wayward, misguided sons. Argument, warning, and entreaty were blended in its composition. It began by calmly refuting, one by one, the leading positions of the nullifiers. The *right to annul*, and the *right to secede*, as claimed by them, were shown to be incompatible with the fundamental idea and main object of the constitution; which was "to form a more perfect Union." That the tariff act complained of did operate unequally was granted, but so did every revenue law that had ever been or could ever be passed.

"The wisdom of man never yet contrived a system of taxation that would operate with perfect equality. If the unequal operation of law makes it unconstitutional, and if all laws of that description may be abrogated by any State for that cause, then indeed is the Federal Constitution unworthy of the slightest effort for its preservation. We have hitherto relied on it as the perpetual bond of our Union. We have received it as the work of the assembled wisdom of the nation. We have trusted to it as to the sheet anchor of our safety, in the stormy times of conflict with a foreign or domestic foe. We have looked to it with sacred awe as the palladium of our liberties, and with all the solemnities of religion have pledged to each other our lives and fortunes here, and our hopes of happiness hereafter, in its defense and support. Were we mistaken, my countrymen, in attaching this importance to the Constitution of our country? Was our devotion paid to the wretched, inefficient, clumsy contrivance, which this new doctrine would make it? Did we pledge ourselves to the support of an airy nothing, a bubble that must be blown away by the first breath of disaffection? Was this self-destroying, visionary theory the work of the profound

statesmen, the exalted patriots, to whom the task of constitutional reform was entrusted? Did the name of Washington sanction, did the States ratify such an anomaly in the history of fundamental legislation? No. We were not mistaken. The letter of this great instrument is free from this radical fault: its language directly contradicts the imputation: its spirit—its evident intent contradicts it.”

The right of a State to secede was strongly denied. “To say that any State may at pleasure secede from the Union is to say that the United States are not a nation.” The individual States are not completely sovereign, for they voluntarily resigned part of their sovereignty. “How can that State be said to be sovereign and independent whose citizens owe obedience to laws not made by it, and whose magistrates are sworn to disregard those laws, when they come in conflict with those passed by another?”

Finally, the people of South Carolina were distinctly given to understand, that, in case any forcible resistance to the laws were attempted by them, the attempt would be resisted by the combined power and resources of the other States. For one word, however, of this kind, there were a hundred of entreaty. “Fellow-citizens of my native State!” exclaimed the President, “let me not only admonish you as the first magistrate of our common country not to incur the penalty of its laws, but use the influence that a father would over his children whom he saw rushing to certain ruin. In that paternal language, with that paternal feeling, let me tell you, my countrymen, that you are deluded by men who are either deceived themselves or wish to deceive you.

“Contemplate the condition of that country of which you still form an important part!—consider its government uniting in one bond of common interest and general protection so many different States—giving to all their inhabitants the proud title of AMERICAN CITIZEN—protecting their commerce—securing their literature and their arts—facilitating their intercommunication—defending the frontiers—and making

their name respected in the remotest parts of the earth ! Consider the extent of its territory, its increasing and happy population, its advance in arts which render life agreeable, and the sciences which elevate the mind ! See education spreading the lights of religion, morality, and general information into every cottage in this wide extent of our Territories and States ! Behold it as the asylum where the wretched and the oppressed find a refuge and support ! Look on this picture of happiness and honor, and say, **WE, TOO, ARE CITIZENS OF AMERICA.** Carolina is one of these proud States, her arms have defended, her best blood has cemented this happy Union ! And then add, if you can, without horror and remorse, this happy Union we will dissolve—this picture of peace and prosperity we will deface—this free intercourse we will interrupt—these fertile fields we will deluge with blood—the protection of that glorious flag we renounce—the very name of Americans we discard. And for what, mistaken men ! for what do you throw away these inestimable blessings—for what would you exchange your share in the advantages and honor of the Union ? For the dream of a separate independence—a dream interrupted by bloody conflicts with your neighbors, and a vile dependence on a foreign power.”

Such were the tone and manner of this celebrated proclamation. It was clear in statement, forcible in argument, vigorous in style, and glowing with the fire of a genuine and enlightened patriotism. It was such a blending of argument and feeling as Alexander Hamilton would have drawn up for Patrick Henry.

The proclamation was received at the North with an enthusiasm that seemed unanimous, and was nearly so. The opposition press bestowed the warmest encomiums upon it. Three days after its appearance in the newspapers of New York, an immense meeting was held in the Park, for the purpose of stamping it with metropolitan approval. Faneuil Hall in Boston was quick in responding to it, and there were Union meetings in every large town of the Northern States. In Tennessee, North Carolina, Virginia, Maryland, Delaware,

Missouri, Louisiana, and Kentucky the proclamation was generally approved as an act, though its extreme federal positions found many opponents. Mr. Clay's opinion of it was that of many of the Southern politicians. "One short week," wrote Mr. Clay on the day the document appeared, "produced the message and the proclamation—the former ultra on the side of State rights, the latter ultra on the side of consolidation. How they can be reconciled, I must leave to our Virginia friends. As to the proclamation, although there are good things in it, especially what relates to the Judiciary, there are some entirely too ultra for me, and which I can not stomach. A proclamation ought to have been issued weeks ago, but I think it should have been a very different paper from the present, which, I apprehend, will irritate instead of allaying the excited feeling."

In South Carolina, it did "irritate the excited feeling." The legislature of that State, being still in session, immediately passed the following resolution :

"Whereas, the President of the United States has issued his proclamation, denouncing the proceedings of this State, calling upon the citizens thereof to renounce their primary allegiance, and threatening them with military coercion, unwarranted by the constitution, and utterly inconsistent with the existence of a free State : Be it, therefore,

"*Resolved*; That his excellency the Governor be requested, forthwith, to issue his proclamation, warning the good people of this State against the attempt of the President of the United States to seduce them from their allegiance, exhorting them to disregard his vain menaces, and to be prepared to sustain the dignity and protect the liberty of the State against the arbitrary measures proposed by the President."

Governor Hayne issued his proclamation accordingly, and a most pugnacious document it was. He denounced the doctrines of the President's proclamation as "dangerous and pernicious ;" as "specious and false ;" as tending "to uproot the very foundation of our political system, annihilate



the rights of the States, and utterly destroy the liberties of the citizen ; as contemplating “ a great, consolidated empire, one and indivisible, the worst of all despotisms.” The Governor declared that the State would maintain its sovereignty, or be buried beneath its ruins. “ As unhappy Poland,” said he, “ fell before the power of the autocrat, so may Carolina be crushed by the power of her enemies ; but Poland was not surrounded by free and independent States, interested, like herself, in preventing the establishment of the very tyranny which they are called upon to impose upon a sister State. If, in spite of our common kindred and common interests, the glorious recollections of the past, and the proud hopes of the future, South Carolina should be coldly abandoned to her fate, and reduced to subjection by an unholy combination among her sister States—which is believed to be utterly impossible—and the doctrines promulgated by the President are to become the foundations of a new system, cemented by the blood of our citizens, it matters not what may be our lot. Under such a government, as there could be no liberty, so there could be no security either for our persons or our property.”

“ Fellow-citizens,” said Governor Hayne, in conclusion, “ in the name and behalf of the State of South Carolina, I do once more solemnly warn you against all attempts to seduce you from your primary allegiance to the State ; I charge you to be faithful to your duty as citizens of South Carolina, and earnestly exhort you to disregard those ‘ vain menaces ’ of military force, which, if the President, in violation of all his constitutional obligations, and of your most sacred rights, should be tempted to employ, it would become your solemn duty, at all hazards, to resist. I require you to be fully prepared to sustain the dignity and protect the liberties of the State, if need be, with ‘ your lives and fortunes.’ And may that great and good Being, as a ‘ father careth for his children,’ inspire us with that holy zeal in a good cause, which is the best safeguard of our rights and liberties.”

The proclamation of the Governor of South Carolina was made public on the last day of the year 1832. The first of February, 1833, the day appointed for the nullification of the tariff laws to take effect, was drawing alarmingly near. Meanwhile the military posts in South Carolina were filling with troops of the United States, and a naval force was anchored off Charleston. The Carolinians continued their military preparations. Fair fingers were busier than ever in making palmetto cockades, and, it is said, a red flag with a black lone star in the center was adopted as the ensign of some of the volunteer regiments. Nullifying steamboats and hotels, it is also reported, exhibited the flag of the United States with the stars downward.

When the proclamation of Governor Hayne reached Washington, the President forthwith replied to it by asking Congress for an increase of powers adequate to the impending collision. The message in which he made this request, dated January 16th, 1833, gave a brief history of events in South Carolina, and of the measures hitherto adopted by the administration ; repeated the arguments of the recent proclamation, and added others ; stated the legal points involved, and asked of Congress such an increase of executive powers as would enable the government, if necessary, to close ports of entry, remove threatened custom-houses, detain vessels, and protect from State prosecution such citizens of South Carolina as should choose, or be compelled, to pay the obnoxious duties.

One of the points made in this message, amused as many of the people, at the time, as were calm enough to be amused. "Oppression" was the favorite word of the South Carolinians in discoursing upon their grievances. That the revenue system hitherto pursued, said the President, "has resulted in no such oppression upon South Carolina, needs no other proof than the solemn and official declaration of the late chief magistrate of that State in his address to the Legislature. In that he says that 'the occurrences of the past year, in connection with our domestic concerns, are to be reviewed

with a sentiment of fervent gratitude to the Great Disposer of human events ; that tributes of grateful acknowledgment are due for the various and multiplied blessings he has been pleased to bestow on our people ; that abundant harvests in every quarter of the State have crowned the exertions of agricultural labor ; that health, almost beyond former precedent, has blessed our homes ; *and that there is not less reason for thankfulness in surveying our social condition.*' " This was a happy hit. It was probably the first time that the formal utterances of thanksgiving which precede state papers were ever made to do duty as rebutting evidence.

Mr. Calhoun was in his place in the Senate chamber when this message was read. He had arrived two weeks before, after a journey which one of his biographers compares to that of Luther to the Diet of Worms. He met averted faces and estranged friends every where on his route, we are told ; and only now and then, some daring man found courage to whisper in his ear : " If you are sincere, and are sure of your cause, go on, in God's name, and fear nothing." Washington was curious to know, we are further assured, what the arch-nullifier would do when the oath to support the constitution of the United States was proposed to him. " The floor of the Senate chamber and the galleries were thronged with spectators. They saw him take the oath with a solemnity and dignity appropriate to the occasion, and then calmly seat himself on the right of the chair, among his old political friends, nearly all of whom were now arrayed against him."\*

After the President's message had been read, Mr. Calhoun rose to vindicate himself and his State, which he did with that singular blending of subtlety and force, truth and sophistry, which characterized his later efforts. He declared himself still devoted to the Union, and said that if the government were restored to the principles of 1798, he would be the last man in the country to question its authority.

A bill conceding to the President the additional powers requested in his message of January 16th was promptly re-

\* Jenkins' Calhoun, p. 247.

ported, and finally passed. It was nicknamed, at the time, the Force Bill, and was debated with the heat and acrimony which might have been expected. As other measures of Congress rendered this bill unnecessary, and it had no practical effect whatever, we need not dwell upon its provisions nor review the debates upon it. It passed by majorities unusually large, late in February.

The first of February, the dreaded day which was to be the first of a fratricidal war, had gone by, and yet no hostile and no nullifying act had been done in South Carolina. How was this? Did those warlike words mean nothing? Was South Carolina repentant? It is asserted by the old Jacksonians that one citizen of South Carolina was exceedingly frightened as the first of February drew near, namely, John C. Calhoun. The President was resolved, and avowed his resolve, that the hour which brought the news of one act of violence on the part of the nullifiers, should find Mr. Calhoun a prisoner of state upon a charge of high treason. And not Calhoun only, but every member of Congress from South Carolina who had taken part in the proceedings which had caused the conflict between South Carolina and the general government. Whether this intention of the President had any effect upon the course of events, we can not know. It came to pass, however, that, a few days before the first of February, a meeting of the leading nullifiers was held in Charleston, who passed resolutions to this effect: that, inasmuch as measures were then pending in Congress which contemplated the reduction of duties demanded by South Carolina, the nullification of the existing revenue laws should be postponed until after the adjournment of Congress; when the Convention would re-assemble, and take into consideration whatever revenue measures may have been passed by Congress. The session of 1833 being the "short" session, ending necessarily on the fourth of March, the Union was respited thirty-two days by the Charleston meeting.

It remains now to relate the events which led to the pacification of this painful and dangerous dispute.

The President, in his annual message, as we have just seen, recommended Congress to subject the tariff to a new revision, and to reduce the duties so that the revenue of the government, after the payment of the public debt, should not exceed its expenditures. He also recommended that, in regulating the reduction, the interests of the manufacturers should be duly considered. We discover, therefore, that while the President was resolved to crush nullification by force, if it opposed by force the collection of the revenue, he was also disposed to concede to nullification all that its more moderate advocates demanded. Accordingly, Mr. McLane, the Secretary of the Treasury, with the assistance of Mr. Gulian C. Verplanck, of New York, and other administration members, prepared a new tariff bill, which provided for the reduction of duties to the revenue standard, and which was deemed by its authors as favorable to the manufacturing interest as the circumstances permitted. This bill, reported by Mr. Verplanck on the 28th of December, and known as the Verplanck bill, was calculated to reduce the revenue thirteen millions of dollars, and to afford to the manufacturers about as much protection as the tariff of 1816 had given them. It put back the "American System," so to speak, seventeen years. It destroyed nearly all that Mr. Clay and the protectionists had effected in 1820, 1824, 1828, and 1832. Is it astonishing that the manufacturers were panic-stricken? Need we wonder that, during the tariff discussions of 1833, two congresses sat in Washington, one in the capitol, composed of the representatives of the people, and another outside of the capitol, consisting of representatives of the manufacturing interest? Was it not to be expected that Mr. Clay, seeing the edifice which he had constructed with so much toil and talent about to tumble into ruins, would be willing to consent to any measure which could even postpone the catastrophe?

The Verplanck bill made slow progress. The outside pressure against it was such, that there seemed no prospect of its passing. The session was within twenty days of its inevitable termination. The bill had been debated and amended,

and amended and debated, and yet no apparent progress had been made toward that conciliation of conflicting interests without which no tariff bill whatever can pass. The dread of civil war, which overshadowed the capitol, seemed to lose its power as a legislative stimulant, and there was a respectable party in Congress, led by Mr. Webster, who thought that all tariff legislation was undignified and improper while South Carolina maintained her threatening attitude. The constitution, Mr. Webster maintained, was on trial. The time had come to test its reserve of self-supporting power. No compromise, no concession, said he, until the nullifying State returns to her allegiance.

No question of so much importance as this can be discussed in Congress without a constant, secret reference to its effect upon the next presidential election. "It is mortifying, inexpressibly disgusting," wrote Mr. Clay to Judge Brooke, in the midst of the debate upon his own compromise bill of this session, "to find that considerations affecting an election now four years distant, influence the fate of great questions of immediate interest more than all the reasons and arguments which intimately appertain to those questions. If, for example, the Tariff now before the House should be lost, its defeat will be owing to two causes—First, The apprehension of Mr. Van Buren's friends, that if it passes, Mr. Calhoun will rise again as the successful vindicator of Southern rights; and second, Its passage might prevent the President from exercising certain vengeful passions which he wishes to gratify in South Carolina. And if it passes, its passage may be attributed to the desire of those same friends of Mr. Van Buren to secure Southern votes."

The fact deplored by Mr. Clay is unquestionable, but the inference which is usually drawn from it may be questioned. Does not the fact reveal to us, that politicians in the United States, no matter what their unpatriotic ambition, are compelled in all their public acts, to watch their masters' eye, and, upon the whole, to carry out their masters' will? To what lengths would not some of them carry their impious

domination, if there were no quadrennial Day of Judgment for them? This terror of the presidential election prevents much good it is true, but it also prevents much evil.

On the 12th of February, Mr. Clay introduced his celebrated Compromise Bill for the regulation of the tariff. It differed from the measure devised by the administration and engineered by Mr. Verplanck, chiefly in this: Mr. Verplanck proposed a sudden, and Mr. Clay a gradual, reduction of duties. The Verplanck bill tended mainly to the conciliation of the nullifiers; the Clay compromise, to the preservation of the manufacturers. Mr. Clay's bill provided that, on the last day of the year 1833, all *ad valorem* duties of more than twenty per cent. should be reduced one tenth; on the last day of the year 1835, there should be a second and a similar reduction; another, to the same amount, at the close of 1837; and, so on, reducing the duties every two years, until on the 31st of June, 1842, all duties should be reduced to or below the maximum of twenty per cent. The object of Mr. Clay was to save all that he could save of the protective policy, and to postpone further action upon the tariff to a more auspicious day.

Then was seen an enchanting exhibition of political principle! Which of these two bills, O reader, innocent and beloved, was most in accordance with Mr. Calhoun's new opinions? Which of them could he most consistently have supported? Not Mr. Clay's, you will certainly answer. Yet it was Mr. Clay's bill that he did support and vote for; and Mr. Clay's bill was carried by the aid of his support and vote. If this course does not prove, that Mr. Calhoun was a "coward and a conspirator," it does prove, I think, that he was not a person of that exalted and Roman-toga cast, which he set up to be, and which he enacted, for some years, with considerable applause. The nullifiers in Congress could have carried the Verplanck bill if they had given it a frank and energetic support. They would have carried it, if the ruling motive of their chief had been purely patriotic.

The most remarkable narrative left by Colonel Benton for

the entertainment of posterity, is that which he gives, in his "Thirty Years' View," of this strange coalition between Mr. Clay and Mr. Calhoun for the passage of the Compromise Bill. Mr. Clay, he tells us, had introduced the measure into the Senate, but the manufacturers could not be reconciled to some of its provisions ; and, without their consent, nothing could be done. At this stage of the affair, Senator John M. Clayton, of Delaware, a protectionist, gave Mr. Clay a piece of advice, which he followed. "These South Carolinians," said Clayton to Clay, "are acting very badly, but they are fine fellows, and it is a pity to let Jackson hang them." He urged Mr. Clay to make a "new move" with his bill, get it referred to a select committee, and so modify it as to render it acceptable to a majority.

The bill was referred to a select committee, accordingly, and that select committee was appointed, of course, by Judge White, the president of the Senate. Respecting the appointment of this important committee, Judge White has left on record a little tale, which shows, among other things, how keenly the President watched the proceedings of Congress, and how resolved he was to deprive the Opposition of all the glory of pacifying the country.

"Before the members of the committee were named," writes Judge White, "I received a note from the President, requesting me to go to his house, as he wished to see me. I returned for answer, that while the Senate was in session it was out of my power to go, but that as soon as it adjourned I would call on him. I felt the high responsibility which rested on me in appointing the committee; the fate of the bill, in a good degree, depended on it; and if the bill failed, we would probably be involved in a most painful conflict. I endeavored to make the best selection I could, by taking some tariff-men, some anti-tariff, one nullifier, and Mr. Clay himself—hoping that if a majority of a committee, in which all interests and views were represented, could agree on any thing, it was likely it would pass. Taking these principles for my guide, I wrote down the names of seven members, Mr. Clayton, of Delaware, being one ; and immediately before we adjourned, handed the names to the secretary, with directions to put them on the journal, and in the course of the evening waited on the President. Soon after we met, he mentioned that he had wished to see me on the subject of appointing a committee on Mr. Clay's bill, to ask that Mr.



Clayton might not be put on it; as he was hostile to the administration, and unfriendly to Mr. McLane, he feared he would use his endeavor to have a preference given to Mr. Clay's bill over that of the Secretary of the Treasury, or words to that effect. I observed, in answer, that it would always give me great pleasure to conform to the wishes of my political friends, whenever I could do so with propriety; but that the treasury bill had been so altered and mangled, and that, as I understood, in a good degree by the votes of his own party, that it had but few friends; that we seemed to be on the eve of a civil war, and that, for the sake of averting such a calamity, I would further all in my power any measure, come from whom it might, which would give peace to the country, and that any bill, having that for its object, was esteemed by me a measure *above party*, and any man who was the author of it was welcome to all the credit he could gain by it. But, at all events, it was too late to talk on the subject, as I had handed the names of the committee to the secretary before we adjourned; and that as I had a very high opinion of Mr. Clayton's talents and liberal feelings, I had put him on the committee, without knowing he was personally unkind to the Secretary of the Treasury. He then asked me if I could not see the secretary of the Senate that evening, and substitute some other name for Mr. Clayton, before the journal was made up. I told him I could not—in my judgment it would be wrong; and then the interview terminated."\*

Mr. Clayton was retained on the committee, therefore, and it was directly owing to his tact and firmness, according to Colonel Benton, that the bill was passed. He began by making it a *sine qua non* that the compromise bill, with all the amendments agreed upon, should be voted for by Mr. Calhoun and the other nullifiers, so as to commit them to the principles involved in the bill, and to give the manufacturers an assurance of the perpetuity of the compact. He was equally explicit in demanding that Mr. Clay, also, should record his vote upon the bill and its amendments. The closing struggle between policy and principle let our eye-witness, Colonel Benton, describe :

"Mr. Clayton being inexorable in his claims, Mr. Clay and Mr. Calhoun agreed to the amendments, and all voted for them, one by one, as Mr. Clay offered them, until it came to the last—that revolting measure of the home valuation. As soon as it was proposed, Mr. Calhoun and his

\* Memoirs of Hugh L. White, p. 299.

friends met it with violent opposition, declaring it to be unconstitutional, and an insurmountable obstacle to their votes for the bill if put into it. It was then late in the day, and the last day but one of the session, and Mr. Clayton found himself in the predicament which required the execution of his threat to table the bill. He executed it, and moved to lay it on the table, with the declaration that it was to lie there. Mr. Clay went to him and besought him to withdraw the motion; but in vain. He remained inflexible; and the bill then appeared to be dead. In this extremity, the Calhoun wing retired to the colonnade behind the Vice-President's chair, and held a brief consultation among themselves; and presently Mr. Bibb, of Kentucky, came out and went to Mr. Clayton, and asked him to withdraw his motion to give him time to consider the amendment. Seeing this sign of yielding, Mr. Clayton withdrew his motion—to be renewed if the amendment was not voted for. A friend of the parties immediately moved an adjournment, which was carried; and that night's reflections brought them to the conclusion that the amendment must be passed; but still with the belief that, there being enough to pass it without him, Mr. Calhoun should be spared the humiliation of appearing on the record in its favor. This was told to Mr. Clayton, who declared it to be impossible; that Mr. Calhoun's vote was indispensable, as nothing would be considered secured by the passage of the bill unless his vote appeared for every amendment separately, and for the whole bill collectively. When the Senate met, and the bill was taken up, it was still unknown what he would do; but his friends fell in, one after the other, yielding their objections upon different grounds, and giving their assent to this most flagrant instance (and that a new one) of that protective legislation against which they were then raising troops in South Carolina! and limiting a day, and that a short one, on which she was to be, *ipso facto*, a seceder from the Union. Mr. Calhoun remained to the last, and only rose when the vote was ready to be taken, and prefaced a few remarks with the very notable declaration that he had then to 'determine' which way he would vote. He then declared in favor of the amendment, but upon conditions which he desired the reporters to note; and which being futile in themselves, only showed the desperation of his condition, and the state of impossibility to which he was reduced. Several senators let him know immediately the futility of his conditions; and without saying more, he voted on ayes and noes for the amendment, and afterward for the whole bill."

The compromise bill, which passed in the Senate by a vote of twenty-nine to sixteen, was sprung upon the House of Representatives, and carried in that body by a *coup-de-main*. The Verplanck bill, Col. Benton indignantly informs

us, was afloat in the House, "upon the wordy sea of stormy debate," as late as the 25th of February. "All of a sudden," he continues, "it was arrested, knocked over, run under, and merged and lost in a new one, which expunged the old one and took its place. It was late in the afternoon when Mr. Letcher, of Kentucky, the fast friend of Mr. Clay, rose in his place, and moved to strike out the whole Verplanck bill—every word except the enacting clause—and insert, in lieu of it, a bill offered in the Senate by Mr. Clay, since called the 'compromise.' This was offered in the House without notice, without signal, without premonitory symptom, and just as the members were preparing to adjourn. Some, taken by surprise, looked about in amazement; but the majority showed consciousness, and, what was more, readiness for action. The bill, which made its first appearance in the House when members were gathering up their over-coats for a walk home to their dinners, was passed before those coats had got on the back; and the dinner which was waiting had but little time to cool before the astonished members, their work done, were at the table to eat it. A bill without precedent in the annals of our legislation, and pretending to the sanctity of a compromise, and to settle great questions for ever, went through to its consummation in the fragment of an evening session, without the compliance with any form which experience and parliamentary law have devised for the safety of legislation."

The bill passed in the House by a vote of one hundred and nineteen to eighty-five.

That the President disapproved this hasty, and, as the event proved, unstable compromise, is well known. The very energy with which Col. Benton denounces it shows how hateful it was to the administration. General Jackson, however, signed the bill concocted by his enemies. It would have been more like him to have vetoed it, and I do not know why he did not veto it. The time may come when the people of the United States will wish he had vetoed it, and thus brought to an issue, and settled finally, a question

which, at some future day, may assume more awkward dimensions, and the country have no Jackson to meet it.

Mr. Calhoun left Washington, and journeyed homeward post-haste, after Congress adjourned. "Traveling night and day, by the most rapid public conveyances, he succeeded in reaching Columbia in time to meet the convention before they had taken any additional steps. Some of the more fiery and ardent members were disposed to complain of the compromise act, as being only a half-way, temporizing measure ; but when his explanations were made, all felt satisfied, and the convention cordially approved of his course. The nullification ordinance was repealed, and the two parties in the State abandoned their organizations, and agreed to forget all their past differences."\* So the storm blew over.

One remarkable result of the pacification was, that it strengthened the position of the leading men of both parties. The course was cleared for Mr. Van Buren. The popularity of the President reached its highest point. Mr. Calhoun was rescued from peril, and a degree of his former prestige was restored to him. The collectors of political pamphlets will discover that, as late as 1843, he still had hopes of reaching the presidency by uniting the South in his support, and adding to the united South Pennsylvania. With too much truth he claimed, in subsequent debates, that it was the hostile attitude of South Carolina which alone had enabled Mr. Clay to carry his compromise. "I had him down," said Calhoun, in the Senate, speaking of Mr. Clay, "I had him on his back—I was his master." "*He my master !*" retorted the Kentuckian, "I would not own him for the meanest of my slaves !"

A very few years after these events, before Mr. Van Buren was President, and before Mr. Calhoun was Mr. Van Buren's friend, the Nullifier adopted new tactics. He became the eulogist of slavery, falsely accusing the North of a desire to interfere with that institution in the Southern States. His first speech on this subject contains every argu-

\* Jenkins' Calhoun, p. 314.

ment, assertion, and fact, which constitutes, at this moment, the capital of the party in power. Until he spoke, the South generally felt that slavery was only to be regarded as a choice of evils—an unfortunate inheritance, to be endured as long as it must be endured, to be abolished as soon as it could be abolished safely.\* It was John C. Calhoun that effaced from the heart of the South the benign sentiments of Washington, Jefferson, Madison, and Randolph.

It was Calhoun who began all that is to be deplored in the agitation of slavery questions. It was he who strove to rob the people of the North of their right to petition, and the people of the South of their right to receive what they choose through the mail. It was he who cut the magnetic cord that connected the South with the feeling of the age, and thus made the peaceful solution of the problem difficult, and its speedy solution impossible. It was he who made slavery a maddening topic in the press. It was well said by Mr. Isaac Hill, of New Hampshire, in 1836, that “of all the vehicles tracts, pamphlets, and newspapers, printed and circulated by the abolitionists, there is no ten or twenty of them that have contributed so much to the excitement as a single newspaper printed in this city. I need not name this paper when I inform you that, for the last five years, it has been laboring to produce a Northern and a Southern party—to fan the flame of sectional prejudice, to open wider the breach, to drive harder the wedge, which shall divide the North from the South.” It was the *United States Telegraph*, the confiden-

\* “A hard necessity, indeed, compels us to endure the evil of slavery for a time. It was imposed upon us by another nation, while yet we were in a state of colonial vassalage. It can not be easily or suddenly removed. Yet, while it continues, it is a blot on our national character, and every real lover of freedom confidently hopes that it will be effectually, though it must be gradually, wiped away, and earnestly looks for the means by which this necessary object may be attained. And, until it shall be accomplished, until the time shall come when we can point without a blush to the language held in the Declaration of Independence, every friend of humanity will seek to lighten the galling chain of slavery, and better to the utmost of his power the wretched condition of the slave.”—*Roger M. Taney in 1818, in defense of Rev. Mr. Gruber.*

tial organ of Mr. Calhoun, that was referred to in this passage.

Mr. Clay, as many readers may remember, won great glory at the North by his course during the session of 1833. He was received in New York and New England, this year, with that enthusiasm which his presence in the manufacturing States ever after inspired. The warmth of his reception consoled him for his late defeat at the polls, and gave new hopes to his friends.

But the Colossus of the session was Daniel Webster, well named, then, the Expounder of the Constitution. In supporting the administration in all its anti-nullification measures, he displayed his peculiar powers to the greatest advantage. The subject of debate was the one of all others the most congenial to him, and he rendered services then to his country to which his country may yet recur with gratitude. "Nullification kept me out of the Supreme Court all last winter," he says in one of his letters in 1833. He mentions, also, that the President sent his own carriage to convey him to the capitol on one important occasion. After the adjournment he visited the great West, where he was welcomed with equal warmth by the friends and the opponents of the administration. It was then, I have imagined, that he, too, took the mania for the presidency, of which he died.

Perhaps it is not extravagant to say, that the net result to the United States of the nullification of 1832, and a result worth its cost, was the four exhaustive Propositions into which Mr. Webster condensed his opinions respecting the nature of the compact which unites these States. We can not more fitly take leave of this subject than by reading them again :

"1. That the constitution of the United States is not a league, confederacy, or compact, between the people of the several States in their sovereign capacities ; but a government proper, founded on the adoption of the people, and creating direct relations between itself and individuals.

"2. That no State authority has power to dissolve these

relations ; that nothing can dissolve them but revolution ; and that, consequently, there can be no such thing as secession without revolution.

“ 3. That there is a supreme law, consisting of the constitution of the United States, acts of Congress passed in pursuance of it, and treaties ; and that, in cases not capable of assuming the character of a suit in law or equity, Congress must judge of, and finally interpret, this supreme law, so often as it has occasion to pass acts of legislation ; and, in cases capable of assuming, and actually assuming, the character of a suit, the Supreme Court of the United States is the final interpreter.

“ 4. That an attempt by a State to abrogate, annul, or nullify an act of Congress, or to arrest its operation within her limits, on the ground that, in her opinion, such law is unconstitutional, is a direct usurpation on the just powers of the general government and on the equal rights of other States ; a plain violation of the constitution, and a proceeding essentially revolutionary in its character and tendency.”

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## CHAPTER XXXV.

### THE SUMMER TRAVELS OF THE PRESIDENT.

GENERAL JACKSON passed his sixty-sixth birth-day in the spring of 1833. He stood then at the highest point of his career. Opposition was, for the moment, almost silenced ; and the whole country, except South Carolina, looked up to him as to a savior. He had but to go quietly on during the remaining years of his term, making no new issues, provoking no new controversies, to leave the chair of state more universally esteemed than he was when he assumed it. Going quietly on, however, was not his forte. A storm was already brewing, compared with which the excitements of his first term were summer calms.

The old friends of the old man were leaving him. I observe, in a letter of the President to the Land Commissioner, dated July 20th, 1833, that he announces the death of "that worthy and excellent man, General John Coffee." "With his dying breath," adds the President, "Coffee asked me to appoint William Weakly as his successor to the office of Surveyor-General of the District of Alabama. Weakly is a worthy man ; appoint him." Robert Purdy, too, that fighting gentleman who served as Coffee's second in his duel with young McNairy, in 1805, died about this time, and left an office vacant for the President to fill.

It may be convenient just to mention here—reserving explanations for another page—that three important changes in the cabinet occurred in the month of May, this year. Mr. Livingston, the Secretary of State, left the cabinet to go out as ambassador to France, in the hope of peacefully arranging the spoliation imbroglio. Mr. Louis McLane, the Secretary of the Treasury, was advanced to the Department of State. William J. Duane, a distinguished lawyer of Philadelphia, son of the President's old friend, Colonel Duane, of the far-famed *Aurora*, was appointed Secretary of the Treasury. This appointment was the President's own. Strongly attached to Colonel Duane, and having the highest opinion of his talents and integrity, General Jackson was accustomed, when speaking of his son, to exhaust compliment by saying, "He's a chip of the old block, sir." So he took him into his cabinet. Mr. Duane was a conscientious opponent of the Bank of the United States, and a democrat of the Jeffersonian school.

The greater part of this summer, so fruitful of disaster, was spent by General Jackson in traveling—in drinking deep draughts of the bewildering cup of adulation. A few amusing or characteristic incidents of his journeyings may detain us a moment from matters more important.

An event occurred on the first day's journey that was not of an adulatory nature. On the sixth of May, the President, accompanied by members of his cabinet and by Major Donel-



son, left the capital, in a steamboat, for Fredericksburg, Virginia, where he was to lay the corner-stone of that monument to the mother of Washington which is still unfinished. At Alexandria, where the steamer touched, there came on board a Mr. Randolph, late a lieutenant in the navy, who had been recently dismissed the service. Randolph made his way to the cabin, where he found the President sitting behind a table reading a newspaper. He approached the table, as if to salute the President.

"Excuse my rising, sir," said the General, who was not acquainted with Randolph. "I have a pain in my side which makes it distressing for me to rise."

Randolph made no reply to this courteous apology, but appeared to be trying to take off his glove.

"Never mind your glove, sir," said the General, holding out his hand.

At this moment, Randolph thrust his hand violently into the President's face, intending, as it appeared, to pull his nose. The captain of the boat, who was standing by, instantly seized Randolph, and drew him back. A violent scuffle ensued, during which the table was broken. The friends of Randolph clutched him, and hurried him ashore before many of the passengers knew what had occurred, and thus he effected his escape. The passengers soon crowded into the cabin to learn if the General was hurt.

"Had I known," said he, "that Randolph stood before me, I should have been prepared for him, and I could have defended myself. No villain," said he, "has ever escaped me before ; and he would not, had it not been for my confined situation."

Some blood was seen on his face, and he was asked whether he had been much injured ?

"No," said he, "I am not much hurt ; but in endeavoring to rise I have wounded my side, which now pains me more than it did."

One of the citizens of Alexandria, who had heard of the outrage, addressed the General, and said : "Sir, if you

will pardon me, in case I am tried and convicted, I will kill Randolph for this insult to you, in fifteen minutes !”

“No, sir,” said the President, “I can not do that. I want no man to stand between me and my assailants, and none to take revenge on my account. Had I been prepared for this cowardly villain’s approach, I can assure you all that he would never have the temerity to undertake such a thing again.”

Randolph published statements in the newspapers of the “wrongs” which he said he had received at the hands of the government. The opposition papers, though condemning the outrage, did not fail to remind the President of certain passages in his own life and conversation which sanctioned a resort to violence. Randolph, I believe, was not prosecuted for the assault. His friends said that his object was merely to pull the presidential nose, which, they further declared, he did.

Returning from Fredericksburg, after performing there the pious duty assigned him, the President, early in June, accompanied by Mr. Van Buren, Governor Cass, Mr. Woodbury, Major Donelson, Mr. Earl, and others, began that famous tour which enabled the North to express its detestation of nullification, and its approval of the President’s recent conduct. Baltimore, Philadelphia, New York, Newark, Elizabethtown, Boston, Salem, Lowell, Concord, Newport, Providence, each received the President with every demonstration of regard which ingenuity could devise. Every one in the United States knows how these things are done. Every one can imagine the long processions ; the crowded roofs and windows ; the thundering salutes of artillery ; steamboats gay with a thousand flags and streamers ; the erect, gray-headed old man, sitting his horse like a centaur, and bowing to the wild hurrahs of the Unterrified with matchless grace ; the rushing forward of interminable crowds to shake the President’s hand ; the banquets, public and private ; the toasts, addresses, responses ; and all the other items of the price which a popular hero has to pay for his popularity.

The enthusiasm was real and almost universal. The New York *American*, however, complained that the reception in this city wore a too partisan complexion. "The mass of the citizens, the clergy, the learned professions, and the great middle class, could not approach him at all," said the *American*.

At Philadelphia, the President was induced, after much persuasion, to consult the celebrated Dr. Physick, with regard to that pain in the side and the bleeding at the lungs to which he was subject. Upon meeting the Doctor, the President explained his symptoms, concluding with these words: "Now, Doctor, I can do any thing you think proper to order, and bear as much as most men. There are only two things I can't give up: one is coffee, and the other is tobacco." Rather important exceptions, one would suppose. Mr. Trist, from whom I received this anecdote, added that Doctor Physick was completely captivated by the General's manner. The next day, Mr. Trist had occasion to consult the Doctor upon a case in which both of them were deeply interested; but, said Mr. Trist, he was so full of General Jackson, so penetrated with the gentleness, the frankness, the peculiar and indescribable charm of his demeanor, that he could talk of nothing else.

In New York, the President had a narrow escape or two. After receiving in Castle Garden the address of the corporation, he mounted his horse and passed over the long wooden bridge which formerly connected that fort with the Battery, followed by his suite and a great concourse of officials. He had just reached the land when the crowded bridge gave way, and let the multitude down among the rocks and into the shallow water below. Vice-President, Governor, Cabinet ministers, mayor, aldermen, military officers, and citizens generally, were mingled in an indiscriminate and struggling mass. The wildest confusion and alarm prevailed for several minutes. Gradually, however, the crowd emerged from the ruins, and no one was seriously hurt. Major Jack Downing tells us that Governor Marcy tore his pantaloons a second

time, and that Governor Cass lost his wig. But, he adds, as Governor Cass had all the Indian tribes in his department, he would have no difficulty in finding "a scalp to suit him." Again, in going up Broadway, the General's horse took fright, and would have thrown any horseman less accomplished than himself. On another occasion the wadding of a cannon came within a few inches of singeing the President's white and bristling head.

The Rev. Dr. Van Pelt, of this city, favors the reader with an interesting reminiscence of the President's excursion to Staten Island in the steamboat *Cinderella*. Returning from the Island, the President was enjoying on the upper deck of the boat the enchanting scenery of the most beautiful bay in the world.

"What a country God has given us!" exclaimed the President to Dr. Van Pelt. "How thankful we ought to be that God has given us such a country to live in."

"Yes," replied the Doctor, "and this harbor, General, we think the finest thing in it."

"We have the best country," continued the General, "and the best institutions in the world. No people have so much to be grateful for as we. But ah! my reverend friend, there is one thing that I fear will yet sap the foundations of our liberty—that monster institution, the bank of the United States! Its existence is incompatible with liberty. One of the two must fall—the bank or our free institutions. Next Congress, the effort to effect a re-charter will be renewed; but my consent they shall never have!"

He spoke with great energy, and continued to denounce the bank in unmeasured terms. The Doctor changed the subject, at length, by saying:

"I hear, General, that you were blessed with a Christian companion." ("Companion" is clerical for wife.)

"Yes," said the President, "my wife was a pious, Christian woman. She gave me the best advice, and I have not been unmindful of it. When the people, in their sovereign pleasure, elected me President of the United States,

she said to me, 'Don't let your popularity turn your mind away from the duty you owe to God. Before Him we are all alike sinners, and to Him we must all alike give account. All these things will pass away, and you and I, and all of us must stand before God.' I have never forgotten it, Doctor, and I never shall."

Tears were in his eyes, adds Dr. Van Pelt, as he said these words.

As the boat was nearing the city, some slight confusion on board the boat occurred. To the apology of the marshal, Mr. Coventry Waddell, the General replied: "You were in action, I suppose, sir, and no apology is necessary. You are a young man, Mr. Waddell, and I see around me many who have seen fewer years than I have, and what I now say may be of some use to them. Always take all the time to reflect that circumstances will permit, but when the time for action has come, stop thinking."

Upon reaching Battery Place, an officer approached the President, and asked whether he preferred to ride in a barouche or on horseback. Turning to Mr. Van Buren, the General said,

"Matty, shall we ride in a carriage or on horseback?"

"As the President pleases," said Mr. Van Buren.

"Well, then," added the General, "let us ride on horseback."

Turning to Dr. Van Pelt, he said,

"Farewell, my friend."

"Farewell," said the doctor; "we may never meet again in this world."

"Then may we meet in a better," rejoined the President.

"You have my best wishes, General," said the doctor.

"I believe it," said the General, as he mounted and rode away.

A few days after the departure of the President for New England, the furniture used by him during his stay in the city was sold at auction, and thus divided among his admirers as mementoes of his visit.

Boston received him with extraordinary liberality and enthusiasm. One floor of the Tremont House was set apart for the entertainment of the President and his party. Carriages and four were kept at their disposal. Tickets to every place of amusement in the city were daily provided in profusion. All tolls and fares were intermitted to the friends of the President. Harvard University conferred upon him, in solemn form, in the chapel at Cambridge, the degree of Doctor of Laws; and one of the seniors, Francis Bowen, addressed the President, on behalf of the students, in the Latin language. These ceremonies, of course, gave the wits of the opposition an opportunity—which they improved. Major Jack Downing, whose humorous letters amused the whole country this summer, records that when the President had finished his speech at Downingville, he cried out to him, “You must give them a little Latin, *Doctor*.” Whereupon the President, nothing abashed, “off hat agin,” and thus resumed: “*E pluribus unum, my friends, sine qua non !*”

At Boston, the President, overcome by fatigue, had a dangerous attack of his malady, bleeding at the lungs, which confined him to his room for several days. The hotel was suddenly enveloped in silence. The carpets in the halls of the story occupied by the President were doubled, and the street was covered with tan. The President rallied, and continued his journey as far as Concord. At that point, he suddenly turned his course homeward, visiting Providence and Newport, steaming past New York without stopping, and making the best of his way to the seat of government. The reason assigned for this hasty return was the precarious state of the President's health. But that was not the only reason.

The veracious Downing assures us that the General was delighted with his “tower.” “He is amazingly tickled with the Yankees,” writes the Major, “and the more he sees on ‘em, the better he likes ‘em. ‘No nullification here,’ says he. ‘No,’ says I, ‘General; Mr. Calhoun would stand no more chance down east here than a stumped-tail bull in fly time.’”

Later in the summer, the President, accompanied by Mr.

Blair, of the *Globe*, visited his favorite sea-shore resort, the Rip-raps of Virginia. A little circumstance that occurred on the steamboat that conveyed the party down the Chesapeake shows that Andrew Jackson had that kind of assurance of safety and success which Cæsar had in his fortunes and Napoleon in his star. The boat was a crazy old tub, and the waves were running high. An aged gentleman on board exhibited a good deal of alarm. "You are uneasy," said the General to him; "you never sailed with *me* before, I see."

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## CHAPTER XXXVI.

### WAR UPON THE BANK RENEWED.

It is the nature of every thing that has life to try to prolong its life. So the Bank of the United States could not make up its mind to die on the 4th of March, 1836. By the aid of the press, and, possibly, by other means less legitimate, it still hoped to obtain a re-charter from Congress by a majority that would render the veto of the President powerless.

I say, *possibly*, by means less legitimate. The charge was made, and there was probably truth in the charge; but how much truth, it is impossible to ascertain. Unquestionably, the president, the directors, the employés of the great bank desired a re-charter, as much as the Jackson politicians desired a perpetuation of their power; and for the same reasons. Unquestionably, the resources and the influence of the bank were, in some degree, employed to secure a re-charter. Unquestionably, a member of Congress or an influential editor who presented a note to be discounted at the bank, was more likely to obtain the accommodation sought than any other man of equal credit. I think it highly probable that this species of favoritism was carried, in the later years of the struggle for life, to an extent that was most unwise, if not

criminal. The instance related by Col. Benton must be taken with some allowance ; for Col. Benton, in the height of the contest, was bank-mad, and was prepared to believe any thing ill of Nicholas Biddle. "The manner," says Benton, "in which the loans to members of Congress were made, was told me by one of these members who had gone through this process of bank accommodation ; and who, voting against the bank, after getting the loan, felt himself free from shame in telling what had been done. He needed \$4,000, and could not get it at home ; he went to Philadelphia—to the bank—inquired for Mr. Biddle—was shown into an ante-room, supplied with newspapers and periodicals ; and asked to sit, and amuse himself—the president being engaged for the moment. Presently a side door opened. He was ushered into the presence—graciously received—stated his business—was smilingly answered that he could have it, and more if he wished it ; that he could leave his note with the exchange committee, and check at once for the proceeds : and if inconvenient to give an endorser before he went home, he could do it afterwards : and whoever he said was good, would be accepted. And in telling me this, the member said he could read 'bribery' in his eyes."

I have been told, twenty times, in the course of my inquiries on this subject, that Daniel Webster's checks for sums as large as five thousand dollars were paid by the bank when Mr. Webster had not a dollar in the bank. Every one must have heard similar stories, for they are still current. When, however, we look over the list of directors, and find there the names of men known to have been honest and honorable all their lives, men of even punctilious honesty in their private dealings, we find it impossible to believe such tales. In later years, when the bank had ceased to be a national institution, and was governed almost absolutely by the "emperor Nicholas," there was, indeed, a looseness in the management of its affairs that we know not whether to ascribe to corruption or to incapacity. A memoir of Nicholas Biddle, if honestly written, would be a most valuable contribution to the history of the country and of business, and would explain



many things in the later career of the bank which are now lost in a chaos of figures, statements, counter-statements, and vituperation. Even when the final crash came, no man in the country seems to have been more sincerely astonished at it than Nicholas Biddle. How instructive it would be to men of business to have such an incredible mystery explained.

But it does not belong to our subject to explore in that direction. The directors of the bank made no attempt to conceal that they spent considerable sums in printing and circulating documents designed to vindicate the bank against the charges of the President of the United States. The bank, said they in their celebrated report of December, 1833, owns no press and sustains no press ; does not interfere, and has not interfered with elections. In defending itself against the charges brought by the administration, it had expended in four years, the sum of fifty-eight thousand dollars ; an expenditure which the directors justified as well as avowed. "The Bank," they said, "asserts its clear right to defend itself equally against those who circulate false statements, and those who circulate false notes. Its sole object, in either case, is self-defense. It can not suffer itself to be calumniated down, and the interests confided to its care sacrificed by falsehoods. A war of unexampled violence has been waged against the Bank. The institution defends itself. Its assailants are what are called politicians ; and when statements which they can not answer, are presented to the country, they reproach the bank with interfering in politics. As these assaults, too, are made at the period of public elections, the answers of the bank must of course follow at the same time : and thus, because these politicians assail the bank on the eve of elections, unless the institution stands mute, it is charged with interfering in politics, and influencing elections. The bank has never interfered in the slightest degree in politics, and never influenced or sought to influence elections ; but it will not be deterred by the menaces or clamors of politicians, from executing its duty in defending itself. Of the time and manner and degree and expense connected with this ser-

vice, the board of directors claim to be the sole and exclusive judges."

General Jackson, as we have before mentioned, recommended Congress, in his message of December, 1832, to sell out the stock held by the United States in the bank, and to investigate again the condition of the bank, with a view to ascertain whether the public deposits were safe in its keeping. This intimation of the bank's insolvency caused a fall of six per cent. in the market price of its stock. In Congress, however, the institution was still so strong that the proposition to sell out the public stock, and the resolution implying a want of confidence in the bank's solvency, were voted down by immense majorities. Congress evidently regarded the recommendations of the message of 1832 as the offspring of an implacable enmity, which even victory had not been able to soften.

Congress had baffled the President, but could not divert him from his purpose. Three fixed ideas wholly possessed his mind: First, that the bank was insolvent; secondly, that the bank was steadily engaged in buying up members of Congress; thirdly, that the bank would certainly obtain a two-thirds majority at the very next session unless he, the President, could give the institution a crippling blow before Congress met.

The reason why the President thought the bank insolvent must be briefly explained. In March, 1832, the Secretary of the Treasury, Mr. McLane, informed Mr. Biddle of the government's intention to pay off, on the first of July, one-half of the three per cent. stock, which would amount to six millions and a half of dollars; but added, "if any objection occurs to you, either as to the amount or mode of payment, I will thank you to suggest it." An objection did occur to Mr. Biddle, and he went to Washington for the purpose of making it known to the Secretary of the Treasury. So far as the bank is concerned, said Mr. Biddle, there is no objection whatever. But, added he, the payment of so large a sum, several millions of which will immediately leave the

country on account of the foreign stockholders, will certainly embarrass the business men of the commercial centers. Duties to the amount of nine millions were to be paid before the first of July, which could not be done unless merchants enjoyed rather more than less of the usual bank accommodation. Mr. Biddle advised the government to postpone the payment, therefore, and agreed to pay the interest on the amount which would thus be left in the bank. The offer was accepted. The arrangement was beneficial to the bank, as it paid but three per cent. for the use of the money ; beneficial to the government, as it received as much interest as it paid the stockholders ; beneficial to the country, as it prevented a large sum from going abroad at a time when it was pressingly needed at home.

It excited surprise and remark at the time that Mr. Biddle should have gone to Washington, in person, to arrange this postponement, instead of expressing his views by letter. But the truth was, as the directors explained, that "the letter of the Secretary was received so immediately before the period fixed for issuing the notice of payment, that if any thing were to be done at all, it was to be done only by personal communication with the Secretary, as there was no time for correspondence."

A second time, the extinguishment of the same stock was postponed, which the directors thus explained : "The resources of the government were threatened with the greatest danger by the appearance of the cholera, which had already begun its ravages in New York and Philadelphia, with every indication of pervading the whole country. Had it continued as it began, and all the appearances in July warranted the belief of its continuance, there can be no doubt it would have prostrated all commercial credit, and seriously endangered the public revenue, as in New York and Philadelphia alone, the demand on account of the foreign three per cents. was about five millions. The bank, therefore, made an arrangement with the foreign owners of this stock, to the amount of \$4,175,373 92, to leave their money in the

country for another year, the bank assuming to pay the interest instead of the government. Having settled this, the bank resumed its usual facilities of business to the community."

General Jackson, although he consented to the first postponement, drew from Mr. Biddle's conduct, particularly his coming to Washington, the inference that the bank could not pay the three per cents., and was, in fact, an insolvent institution. "I tell you, sir," he would say, "she's broke. Mr. Biddle is a proud man, and he never would have come on to Washington to ask me for a postponement if the bank had had the money. Never, sir. The bank's broke, and Biddle knows it. Her stock is not worth seventy-five cents on the dollar this minute." No argument could shake this opinion; and when, in 1842, the United States Bank of Pennsylvania went to pieces, and brought ruin upon thousands, the comment of General Jackson amounted to this: "I told you so."

Col. Benton also adduces the President's declaration of the bank's insolvency as a proof of his sagacity, and he draws a horrible picture of the disaster of 1842, to justify the President's hostility to the bank in 1833. He also denies that the hostility of the President had any thing in it of the rancorous or vindictive.

If there is in existence any credible evidence that the Bank of the United States was not solvent in 1833, or any credible evidence that the bank was then endeavoring to secure a re-charter by unequivocally dishonorable means, I have not been able to discover it. Its complaisance to members of Congress may have been carried too far. It was not in human nature that it should not be. An institution such as the Bank of the United States was in 1833, giving an honorable livelihood and social distinction to five hundred persons, can no more go out of existence without a struggle, than a strong man can die without a struggle in the prime of his powers. And this is really one of the weightiest objections against the existence of such an institution. A bank with a limited

charter will as certainly direct its energies to procure a renewal as an office-holder, under the rotation system, is chiefly concerned to obtain a reappointment. He would gladly serve the people, if the people, in return, would secure his children's bread; but, as the people will not do that, he serves his party, who will if they can.

But a truce to disquisition. We have now arrived at that measure—fruitful of many disasters and of great eventual good—known as the Removal of the Deposits. The caricaturists of 1833 represent the President and his friends in the act of carrying huge sacks of money from the Bank of the United States. In this sense the deposits were never removed. The measure proposed by the President, was not to remove the public money suddenly and in mass from the bank, but merely to *cease depositing* the public money in the bank, drawing out the balance remaining in its vaults as the public service required. The amount of public money in the bank had averaged nearly eight millions of dollars for some years past, which sum was so much added to the bank's available capital.

What a simple, what a harmless measure this appears! And harmless it would have been, but for one lamentable circumstance. *The government had not devised a proper place to which to transfer the public money.* The sub-treasury had not yet been thought of, or only thought of. The complete and eternal divorce which that wise and simple expedient effected between bank and state, came too late to save the country from four years of most disastrous "experiment." The plan proposed in 1833 was, instead of depositing the public money in the Bank of the United States and its twenty-five branches, to deposit it in a similar number of State banks. What good could be hoped from such a partial measure? We can not wonder that every member of the Cabinet, except two, besides some important members of the kitchen cabinet, and a large majority of the President's best friends, opposed it from the beginning to the end.

The measure occurred to the President while he was con-

versing, one day early in the year 1833, with Mr. Blair, of the *Globe*, who hated the bank only less than the President himself did. "Biddle," said Mr. Blair, "is actually using the people's money to frustrate the people's will. He is using the money of the government for the purpose of breaking down the government. If he had not the public money he could not do it."

The President said, in his most vehement manner: "He shan't have the public money. I'll remove the deposits! Blair, talk with our friends about this, and let me know what they think of it."

Mr. Blair complied with this request. He consulted several of the President's constitutional and unconstitutional advisers—among others, Mr. Silas Wright, of New York. Every man of them opposed the removal, unless it were done by the authority of Congress. Mr. Wright was particularly decided in his opposition. He said that the withdrawal of the public money from the bank would compel it to curtail its business to such a degree, that half the merchants in the country would fail. Mr. Wright argued upon the subject as though the public money, instead of being deposited in the Bank of the United States, was about to be thrown into the sea. The real effect of the removal—which was to stimulate the business of the country to the point of explosion—did not occur to him, nor to any one.

In the course of a day or two, Mr. Blair informed the President that he had consulted the leading friends of the administration upon the measure proposed, and that they were all against it. "Oh," said the President, with a nonchalance that surprised the editor of the *Globe*, "my mind is made up on *that* matter. Biddle shan't have the public money to break down the public administration with. It's settled. My mind's made up." That was the only explanation he ever gave, in conversation, of his course with regard to the deposits. When letters of remonstrance reached him, hundreds in a day, his comment was ever the same: "Biddle shall not use the public money to break down the

government." The same idea was through all his public papers on the subject.

Before proceeding to relate the manner in which the President accomplished his purpose, I will afford the reader an "inside view" of the perturbations of the cabinet caused by the announcement of his intention. The narrative annexed was written, soon after the events occurred, by Major Lewis, chiefly for his own use and entertainment. No part of it has ever been published before. The reader who is curious in cabinet-ware, will be amused and edified by its perusal. It will illustrate our motto: "Desperate courage makes One a majority."

NARRATIVE BY MAJOR WM. B. LEWIS.

"I received from General Cass, September 23d, 1833, the following note: 'My dear Major, may I ask you, as a particular favor, to postpone your journey till day after to-morrow? I have a particular reason for making this request, which I will explain to you to-morrow, and which, I am sure, you will consider satisfactory.'

"This note of Governor Cass' led to a very interesting and important conversation. Business made it necessary that I should visit Virginia, and having been already detained by request of the President, several days beyond the time I had set for my departure, I determined to leave on the morning of the 24th. Governor Cass knew this, but wishing to have some conversation with me before I left, desired, as stated in his note, that I would postpone my trip until the next day. This I could not do, but consented to see him the next morning after an early breakfast at my office, if that would answer his purpose. He consented to this arrangement, and accordingly called about half past eight o'clock.

"He commenced the conversation by remarking that his object in desiring to see me before I left, was to inform me that he had determined to resign his seat in the cabinet, and wished to converse with me upon the subject before he handed his letter of resignation to the President. I was very much surprised at this, and inquired of him the reason for this step he was about to take. He said he differed with the President with regard to the measures which were about to be adopted for the removal of the public deposits from the United States Bank, and, as his remaining in the cabinet might embarrass his operations, he owed it, he thought, both to himself and the President, to withdraw. This, he said, was the reason, and, owing to the relations which had so happily subsisted between himself and me ever since he came to Washington, he did not like to do so without first apprising me of his intentions.

"I told him I regretted exceedingly that he should think it necessary to resign. I thought he had taken a mistaken view of the subject, and expressed a wish that he would reconsider the matter.

"He said that he had already reflected much upon this subject, and that both he and Mr. McLane, Secretary of State, were fully of the opinion that they ought not to remain in the cabinet. He added that he had already prepared his letter of resignation, and intended handing it on that day to the President.

"This information rendered me very unhappy, for I foresaw that an explosion in the cabinet, at that conjuncture, might be attended with serious, if not fatal consequences to the administration. I thought it doubtful, at best, whether Congress would sustain the President in directing the deposits to be removed from the custody of the United States Bank; but if Governor Cass and Mr. McLane withdrew from the cabinet, and their friends, who were numerous and powerful in and out of Congress, should throw themselves against the measure, *I believed Congress would not sustain him*. With these apprehensions weighing upon my mind, I resolved, for the sake of the President, the success of whose administration I had greatly at heart, to make an effort to prevent, if possible, a step so fatal to it as I believed that would be. I, therefore, inquired of Governor Cass if he had spoken to the President upon the subject of his intended resignation. He said he had not. I again repeated to him that I thought there was no necessity for him and McLane to resign; that I was sure their disagreeing with the President in relation to the removal of the deposits, or the manner of doing it, would not make the slightest difference with him. I added that I knew his confidence in both of them was unimpaired, and that I felt fully warranted in saying that he would greatly prefer they should remain in the cabinet. I then begged him to go and see the President that morning, and have a conversation with him upon the subject.

"He consented to do so, and left immediately. In about half an hour he returned, and appeared to be exceedingly gratified at the interview. He said he never saw the President so kind, or more frank, than on that occasion.

"'Well,' said I, 'what did he say to you? Does he think you and McLane had better resign?'

"'Not at all,' he replied. 'He assured me that his confidence in both of us was undiminished, and that he should regret exceedingly to lose us; and, at the same time, added there was not the least necessity for our withdrawing from his cabinet.'

"'Then,' I replied, 'I hope you will not withdraw,' adding that I thought it would be treating him very badly were he and Mr. McLane to desert him in such a crisis.



He replied that if McLane would consent to remain, he would be willing to continue.

“ ‘ Well then,’ said I, ‘ go down without delay to the State Department, and see him, and, if possible, prevail on him not to leave the cabinet,’ which he did immediately.

“ After dispatching some public business, which it was necessary for me to attend to before leaving for Virginia, I stepped over to the President’s house to take leave of him, and at the same time to see Governor Cass, who promised, after having a conversation with Mr. McLane, to meet me there. I had scarcely entered the house before he came with a pleasant smile upon his face.

“ ‘ Well,’ said I, ‘ do you bring me good news ?’

“ Nothing definite had, as yet, been agreed upon, he replied ; but he had hopes of being able to get every thing arranged in such a manner as would not only be satisfactory, but obviate the necessity of their withdrawing from the cabinet. I told him I had no doubt of it, and hoped he would not cease his exertions until the arrangements were accomplished. As he was anxious to see the President and have a further conversation with him, I took my leave of him and departed for Virginia. This unpleasant affair was thus happily arranged.

“ While upon this deposit question, it may not be improper nor yet unprofitable to advert to other circumstances connected with the subject. It is one that excited much feeling and involved important consequences both to the country and the party in power. It was the origin of much trouble and difficulty among the friends and supporters of General Jackson—a rock upon which the democratic party (so called) had well nigh been wrecked at the time, and from which it never afterward entirely recovered.

“ With whom the idea of withdrawing the public money from the United States Bank originated, I know not, but it was started soon after President Jackson’s second election, and was warmly discussed by a few of his friends in Washington, from that time until the order was given by him for their removal. I happened one evening to be at Mr. Blair’s, editor of the *Globe*, in the month of February, 1833, in company with Dr. William Jones, city postmaster, when the conversation turned upon the United States Bank, and the withdrawal of the public deposits from its custody. Mr. Blair maintained most vehemently that the damned bank ought to be put down, and the only effectual way of doing it was to take from it the whole of the public money ; if it were allowed to retain that, he said, it would undoubtedly be re-chartered.

“ ‘ How could the possession of the public money aid it,’ I inquired, ‘ in obtaining a charter ?’

“ ‘ Why,’ said he, ‘ by corrupting the members of Congress ; it would

have the *means*,' he added, 'of buying up half the members, and would do it unless the public funds were taken from it.'

" 'How very extravagantly,' I remarked to Mr. Blair, 'you talk; you must entertain a very poor opinion of the integrity and honor of the members of Congress, to believe them capable of such degrading and infamous conduct.'

"He said their conduct at the last, as well as at the present session, showed they were capable of *any thing* where the interest of the bank was concerned. He would not trust them any more than he would Biddle and the other officers of the bank, and he would not trust either further than he could throw a bull by the tail.

" 'But,' said I, 'Mr. Blair, do you really think the President would order the public money to be drawn from the bank merely for the sake of crippling, or, as you say, *breaking* it?'

"Why, yes, he said, he thought he would; at any rate, he thought he ought to do it.

" 'Well,' I remarked, 'I differ with you in opinion. I neither think he ought nor will do it.'

"I then inquired of him if he thought the Vice-President elect, Mr. Van Buren, would advise such a measure.

" 'Yes,' he said, 'I have no doubt of it.'

"I told him I did not believe it.

" 'Why do you not believe it?' said he. 'Have you ever heard him express his opinions upon the subject?'

" 'No,' I replied, 'but Mr. Van Buren is too prudent and discreet a man, and, withal, has too much sense to advise such rash measures.'

"This remark excited him still more, and snatching up his hat, said he would not wait to know what he thought in relation to the matter, and started in pursuit of him. As he left the room, I remarked to him I would not leave until he returned.

"Mr. Blair was gone nearly or quite an hour before he returned; but Dr. Jones, who was present during the whole of the conversation, and myself remained until he came back. He entered the room with evidently dissatisfied as well as subdued looks.

" 'Well,' said I, 'Mr. Blair, have you seen Mr. Van Buren?'

" 'Yes,' was his reply.

" 'Is he in favor of removing the deposits or not. Are you or myself right as regards his opinions upon this subject?'

"His reply was, that Mr. Van Buren was *opposed* to the removal. Such a step, he thought, would be both injudicious and impolitic.

"I told him I agreed with him, and that I thought he would find a large majority of the President's friends of the same way of thinking.

"Here the conversation ended, and Dr. Jones and myself left.

"Although Mr. Blair was disappointed and mortified at finding Mr. Van Buren opposed to this favorite scheme of his, yet it did not dampen his ardor in the least. It was his theme by day and by night, talking to all his friends that would listen to him, and urging it as absolutely necessary to prevent the bank from getting its charter renewed. It was useless to tell him that the President could prevent that, at any time, by the use of the veto power. The reply was that it would be carried over his veto! He let no opportunity slip of arousing the fears of the President, and exciting his feelings against the bank; and in this he was aided by Mr. Kendall and Mr. Reuben M. Whitney.

"A few weeks later, I embraced the earliest opportunity to inquire of Mr. Van Buren what had been determined upon with regard to the removal of deposits? His answer was, he thought the President had made up his mind to remove them from the United States Bank. I told him I regretted it, because I thought it would be productive of much mischief to the country, to the party in power, and to the President himself. He said the question was *settled*, and made a few remarks in justification of the course of the President, by which I saw very clearly that his opinions had undergone a change. I dropped the subject, and have never mentioned it to Mr. Van Buren since.

"Not long after the President returned from the Rip Raps, I happened to be with him in his private chamber, and as the conversation turned upon the all engrossing topic of removing the deposits, he asked me if I had seen the correspondence between him and Colonel Duane upon that subject. I told him I had not. He then took from his private files a large package of papers, and said:

" 'Here it is. Read it, and let me know what you think of it.'

"I accordingly gave it an attentive perusal, which, as it was very voluminous, took me at least two hours. As I handed back the papers, 'Well,' said he, 'don't you think Mr. Duane's letters are very weak?' 'No,' I told him, 'I thought they were very well written; in fact, that I thought the correspondence evidenced a good deal of ability on both sides. The difficulty, however,' I remarked, 'upon my mind was not as regarded the *right* to do the thing, but the necessity for doing it. It would seem to me,' I added, 'that it would be much better to wait until Congress met, and let them legislate upon the subject, unless he thought the public funds in danger of being lost if permitted to remain longer in the United States Bank.'

" 'I do think so,' he quickly and energetically replied. 'Besides,' said he, 'I have no confidence in Congress.'

" 'But, General,' I remarked, 'Mr. Duane would be assuming a very heavy responsibility in removing the public moneys from the custody of the bank, in the face of a resolution passed by the House of Representatives

at its last session, by a very large majority, perhaps two-thirds, declaring them, in its opinion, safe.'

"'But,' said he, 'I don't want him to assume the responsibility. Have I not said that I would take the responsibility?'

"'Yes,' I told him, 'he had said so; but it was doubtful whether any person could be made responsible but the Secretary himself, because if done at all, it must be done by him, as the law gave that power to no other person.'

"I then inquired of him what he would do if Congress, when it met, should pass a joint resolution, directing the Secretary to restore the deposits to the bank?

"'Why,' said he, 'I would veto it.'

"This, I told him, would be, in my opinion, a much stronger question against the administration than the vetoing of the bill re-chartering the bank. The southern members were, I added, almost to a man, *obliged*, from the peculiar notions of their constituents, to sustain his veto upon that bill, but not as regards this measure, which involves no constitutional question. 'Besides,' said I, 'many of the members who were elected to support your administration *generally*, only wanted a *pretext* to throw themselves into the ranks of the opposition.'

"'Under such circumstances, General,' I remarked, 'suppose they should be able to carry the resolution over your veto? What then would you do? If you refuse to permit the secretary to do it, the next step, on the part of the House, would be to move an impeachment, and if Congress have the power to carry this resolution through in defiance of the veto power, they would be able to prosecute it to a successful termination.'

"'Under such circumstances,' he replied, elevating himself to his full height and assuming a firm and dignified aspect, 'then, sir, I would resign the presidency and return to the Hermitage!'

"After the General's emphatic declaration that he would resign and return to the Hermitage rather than be instrumental in restoring the deposits to the United States Bank, there was a pause in our conversation for a few minutes; but it was renewed again by my asking him what object was to be attained by a removal of the deposits from the bank at that time?

"'To prevent it from being re-chartered,' was the reply.

"'But,' said I, 'can not that object be as certainly attained, as well without as with the removal of them?'

"'No, sir,' said he, 'if the bank is permitted to have the public money, there is no power that can prevent it from obtaining a charter—it will have it if it has to buy up all Congress, and the public funds would enable it to do so!'

"'Why, General,' I remarked, 'as the bank's charter expires twelve months before you go out of office, you will at all times have it in your

power to prevent it by vetoing any bill that may be sent to you for that purpose. Would it not be better, then,' I asked, 'to let it go quietly out of existence?'

" 'But, sir,' said he, 'if we leave the means of corruption in its hands, the presidential veto will avail nothing.'

"This conviction had fastened itself so *firmly* on his mind, I discovered, that it was impossible to remove it by any thing I could say, and I therefore dropped the subject. The conversation was conducted on the part of the President with calmness and moderation—evincing not the least excitement as was sometimes the case when speaking about, or discussing the question of removal.

"He then asked me if I would read Mr. McLane's opinions, or arguments against removing the deposits; 'but,' said he, 'it is not written with his usual ability—owing undoubtedly, to his having taken a wrong view of the subject.'" I told him, as it was getting late, and as the opinion appeared to be a very long one, I would, with his leave, embrace some other opportunity of reading it. The conversation referred to above, took place a short time before the removal of Mr. Duane from the Treasury Department.

"The General was very much annoyed at the idea of having to remove him, and would gladly have avoided it if he could have done so consistently with what *he* considered his duty to the public. He had, previously to the unfortunate difficulty, entertained for him a high personal regard. Indeed, he told me apparently with great satisfaction, in the latter part of November, or early in December, 1832, that he intended to offer the Treasury Department to him, when Mr. McLane should be transferred to the State Department, which would be the following spring.

" 'My cabinet appointments have been generally made upon the commendation of my friends, but this,' said he, 'will be *my own*. I like the stock; his father was an able financier, a sound republican, a good patriot, and an honest man; and the son, in my estimation, is in every respect equal to his father.'

"He little dreamed, when pronouncing this eulogy upon father and son, that the appointment which he spoke of conferring upon the latter, in his private chamber, would occasion him so much trouble and heart-burning! But it is not given to man to dive into the secrets of futurity. When things were rapidly drawing to a crisis, with regard to Mr. Duane, and perceiving, from frequent conversations with the President, that he still had a lingering feeling of kindness for him, I asked the General if some arrangement could not be made by which *he* would be spared the pain and Mr. Duane the mortification of a removal? He said he knew of none.

" 'Would not Mr. Duane,' I inquired, 'be willing to take some other situation and leave the department voluntarily?'

"He did not know, he said, but if he would he should have it. I then

asked him if he would allow me to endeavor to ascertain. He said he had not the least objection, and authorized me to say that if he desired it he should have a foreign mission. It was found impossible, however, to make any such arrangement, and the President, as things then stood, was left no alternative but to dismiss him, which he did."

It thus appears that the hearty supporters of the President in the removal of the deposits were Mr. Blair, Mr. Kendall, Mr. Taney, Mr. Barry, and Reuben M. Whitney. To these was soon added the indomitable Benton, the predestined champion of the measure in the Senate. He was in Virginia, he tells us, when he first heard of the President's intention. "I felt," he says, "an emotion of the moral sublime at beholding such an instance of civic heroism. And I repaired to Washington at the approach of the session with a full determination to stand by the President, which I believed to be standing by the country; and to do my part in justifying his conduct, and in exposing and resisting the powerful combination which it was certain would be formed against him."

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## CHAPTER XXXVII.

### MR. DUANE'S NARRATIVE.

It is not true, as has been a hundred times asserted, that Mr. Duane was appointed Secretary of the Treasury for the purpose of removing the deposits. The post was offered him in December, 1832, when the President had not yet conceived the idea of removing them by an act of executive authority. Mr. Duane owed his appointment to the respect and affection which General Jackson entertained for his father and for himself. There was no intrigue or mystery about it.

In 1838 Mr. Duane wrote, and printed for distribution among his friends, the story of his brief and troublous tenure of the second place in General Jackson's Cabinet. His

narrative, besides giving many glimpses of General Jackson, valuable for the purposes of biography, tells the greater part of the story of the removal of the deposits, and tells it in a very entertaining manner. As this narrative was, doubtless, printed for the purpose of rescuing from oblivion the singular events recorded in it, I shall be promoting the author's purpose by presenting to the readers of these pages an abstract of its contents. The work itself is only to be found in the libraries of a few collectors, and, occasionally, on the shelves of a public institution.

In December, 1832, Mr. Duane was practicing his profession in Philadelphia, anticipating nothing so little as an invitation to enter public life. He had supported General Jackson in the campaigns of 1824 and 1828, with the ardor natural to him. "I thought," he remarks, "that his country owed him a large debt of gratitude ; that it would be useful to our institutions to have in our executive chair a person unaccustomed to intrigue, too prevalent at Washington ; and that he, who had given such sound advice to Mr. Monroe while President, would never contradict, in practice, what he then declared to be the only patriotic and honorable course for the chief magistrate of a free and enlightened people."

The General, on his part, had shown his confidence in Mr. Duane by appointing him, first, a government director of the United States Bank ; secondly, District-Attorney ; thirdly, a commissioner under the convention with Denmark ; all of which offices Mr. Duane declined ; but was induced to accept the Danish commissionership by the repeated and pressing solicitations of the President. In December, 1832, Mr. McLane came from Washington to Philadelphia, and sought an interview with Mr. Duane, during which the following conversation took place :

THE SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY.—"Mr. Duane, I have been particularly desired by the President to seek this interview with you, on matters of much consequence, not only to himself, but to the country. The President has, for some time past, meditated a change in his cabinet. It has been deferred until after the termination of the elections in the States ;

and as they are now over, the proposed change is urged anew. The present Secretary of State is to go to France; the present Secretary of the Treasury is to take his place in the Department of State; and the question is, who is to go into the treasury? It is settled that a citizen of Pennsylvania is to be appointed, and the President and his friends have sought in that State for a person in all respects competent as an officer, and faithful as a friend. A list of names has been looked at, and, after due inquiry, the President is decidedly convinced that you, sir, present the fairest claims to official and personal consideration. You are of the old democratic party of Pennsylvania, and have grown with its growth. You are known as a mild but unvarying friend of the great political principles which Pennsylvania cherishes. Your personal reputation, too, gives you a moral influence, of the extent of which you are not, perhaps, yourself aware. You were the early and have been the steadfast friend of General Jackson, and should continue in every proper way to sustain him whom you contributed to elevate. So satisfied, indeed, is the President of your peculiar fitness for the department, and of your being just such a person as he can politically as well as personally rely upon, that I can not use too strong terms in describing his solicitude that you should not refuse the station."

MR. DUANE.—"I have listened, sir, to what you have stated with surprise and distress; so that it can not be supposed that I can give a positive reply. I can not express how gratified and proud I am at this mark of confidence. If, however, I am now to give utterance to what I feel, it is to ask the President to blot this matter from his mind. It is true that I have been and am sincerely friendly to the President; that I possess the personal and political confidence of many worthy men in Pennsylvania; and that I have a strong inclination to do all in my power to evince my principles and promote the welfare of the people. But it is also true that my abilities are overrated; that my influence in Pennsylvania is more limited than is supposed; and that no weight can be given, by my accession, to the administration. Such an occasion as the present can not be heedlessly regarded by me, but all considerations united forbid me to assent. I have through life sought the shade, and whenever I have been out of it, it has not been from choice. I have always desired to tread on the earth, lest, in ascending even a single step of the political ladder, I should be obliged to resume my former place. Perhaps this is morbid pride, but be it what it may, it has a powerful influence over me."

THE SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY.—"All you have said, Mr. Duane, shows you have the merit you deny yourself the possession of. You have, by declining office, on several occasions, omitted to advance yourself. I am the President's friend and yours, and am not the man to advocate anything of a doubtful nature, by which the public may be affected. Others



are more competent, perhaps, to judge of your qualifications than you are yourself. Heretofore there have been some difficulties; there may be some at this time, owing to excitement in the South; but that will soon cease, and in a few months you will be perfectly *au fait* as to all general duties. As to your standing in Pennsylvania, we have information to be relied on; we believe your appointment would be pleasing there, and the President desires to do what will gratify that State. Apart from other considerations, the President's own spontaneous preference of you is a compliment not to be overlooked; you will derive credit from it, where you are not known, among all who respect the patriotism and pure intentions, as well as the natural sagacity of the President. I am persuaded that the appointment would be acceptable to many of the President's most distinguished friends. Indeed, the fact that he goes to the people, and not to Congress to select, will give weight to the choice. You will earn a high reputation in the office proposed; and the labors will be less burdensome than those to which you have been accustomed."

MR. DUANE.—"To tear up, as it were, by the roots, my business in Philadelphia, on the uncertainty of continuing in office for four years, would be very imprudent. Changes of residence, associations, and expenditure, are sound objections. Friends to me ought not to urge a proceeding of so doubtful a character."

THE SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY.—"Every man owes something to his country. Even on the question of mere interest, the change will be advantageous. You may be certain of employment for four years, at six thousand dollars per year, and the mode of living is that of a private gentleman in Philadelphia. By identifying yourself with General Jackson and his friends, and making a sacrifice, if it is one, you establish a claim for continuance in this, or appointment to some other station."

MR. DUANE.—"Out of thankfulness, and a desire to make a return for such confidence, my heart urges me to say 'yes;' but my head by no means assents. It will be rude as well as unkind to the President to decide at once, and upon so sudden an appeal on so serious a subject; therefore I will reflect."

Consultation with friends, and a month's reflection, resulted in Mr. Duane's notifying the President that he accepted the post offered him. On the thirtieth of January, 1833, he sent his letter of acceptance to Washington, which the President joyfully acknowledged on the first of February. On the first of June following Mr. Duane took the customary oath, and entered upon the performance of his duties as Secretary of the Treasury. Before he slept that night, an event

occurred which led him to suspect that the place of cabinet minister is not all that the fancy of a politician paints it.

In the evening of his first day in office, Mr. Duane relates :

“ Mr. Reuben M. Whitney called upon me at my lodgings, at the desire, as he said, of the President, to make known to me what had been done, and what was contemplated, in relation to the United States Bank. He stated that the President had concluded to take upon himself the responsibility of directing the Secretary of the Treasury to remove the public deposits from that bank, and to transfer them to State banks : that he had asked the members of the cabinet to give him their opinions on the subject ; that the President had said, ‘ Mr. Taney and Mr. Barry had come out like men for the removal ; ’ that Mr. McLane had given a long opinion against it ; that Mr. Cass was supposed to be against it, but had given no written opinion : that Mr. Woodbury had given an opinion which was ‘ yes ’ and ‘ no ; ’ that the President would make the act his own, by addressing a paper or order to the Secretary of the Treasury : that Mr. Amos Kendall, who was high in the President’s confidence, was now preparing that paper ; that there had been delay owing to the affair at Alexandria ; but, no doubt, the President would soon speak to me on the subject ; that the paper referred to would be put forth as the proclamation had been, and would be made a rallying point : that he (Mr. Whitney) had, at the desire of the President, drawn up a memoir or exposition, showing that the measure might be safely adopted, and that the State banks would be fully adequate to all the purposes of government. He then read the exposition to me ; and, as I desired to understand matters so important and so singularly presented, I asked him to leave the paper with me, which he accordingly did. He also read to me divers letters from individuals connected with State banks. The drift of his further observations was to satisfy me that the executive arm alone could be relied on to prevent a renewal of the United States Bank charter.

“ The communication thus made to me created surprise and mortification. I was surprised at the position of affairs which it revealed ; and mortified at the low estimate which had been formed of the independence of my character. I listened, however, respectfully, to one who gave such evidence of the confidence reposed in him ; and awaited the explanation, which he intimated the President would give. Soon after this interview, I took occasion to express my mortification at my position, to the member of the cabinet who had represented the President in asking me to accept office. On the next evening (Sunday), Mr. Whitney again called on me, in company with a stranger, whom he introduced as Mr. Amos Kendall, a gentleman in the President’s confidence, who would give me any further

explanations that I might desire, as to what was meditated in relation to the United States Bank, and who then called on me, because he was about to proceed forthwith to Baltimore. I did not invite nor check communication. Very little was said, and, perhaps, because I could not wholly conceal my mortification at an attempt apparently made with the sanction of the President, to reduce me to a mere cypher in the administration.

"The next morning, June 3d, I waited upon the President, and, as I had been apprised by Mr. Whitney would be the case, he soon introduced the subject of the bank. I stated that Mr. Whitney had made known to me what had been done, and what was intended, and had intimated that his communication was made at the President's desire. The President replied, in a tone of dissatisfaction, that it was true he had conferred with Mr. Whitney, and obtained information from him as to the bank, but that he did not make him his confidant, nor had he told him to call on me. I enumerated the representations which Mr. Whitney had made, and their correctness was admitted. I said I feared that I should not be able to see the subject in the light in which the President viewed it; to which he remarked, that he liked frankness, that my predecessor and himself had sometimes differed in opinion, but it had made no difference in feeling, and should not in my case; that the matter under consideration was of vast consequence to the country; that unless the bank was broken down, it would break us down; that if the last Congress had remained a week longer in session, two thirds would have been secured for the bank by corrupt means; and that the like result might be apprehended at the next Congress; that such a State bank agency must be put in operation, before the meeting of Congress, as would show that the United States Bank was not necessary, and thus some members would have no excuse for voting for it. My suggestions as to an inquiry by Congress (as in December, 1832), or a recourse to the judiciary, the President repelled, saying it would be idle to rely upon either; referring as to the judiciary to decisions already made, as indications of what would be the effect of an appeal to them in future. After mentioning that he would speak to me again, before his departure to the eastward, the President said he would take with him the opinions of the members of the cabinet, but would send them to me from New York, along with his views; and, on his return, would expect me to give him my sentiments frankly and fully.

"On the 5th of June, the day before his departure, we accordingly had another conversation, which he ended by saying, he did not wish any one to conceal his opinions, and that all he asked was, that I should reflect with a view to the public good.

"I had heard rumors of the existence of an influence at Washington, unknown to the constitution and to the country; and the conviction that they were well founded, now became irresistible. I knew that four of the

six members of the last cabinet, and that four of the members of the present cabinet, opposed a removal of the deposits; and yet their exertions were nullified by individuals, whose intercourse with the President was clandestine. During his absence, several of those individuals called on me, and made many of the identical observations, in the identical language, used by himself. They represented Congress as corruptible, and the new members as in need of especial guidance. They pointed out the importance of a test question, at the opening of the new Congress, for party purposes. They argued that the exercise of the veto power must be secured: that it could be in no other way so effectually attained as by at once removing the deposits; and that, unless they were removed, the President would be thwarted by Congress. In short, I felt satisfied, from all that I saw and heard, that factious and selfish views alone guided those who had influence with the executive; and that the true welfare and honor of the country constituted no part of their objects. I was painfully impressed with these convictions, and also mortified that I should have been considered capable of entering into schemes like these; when, on the 1st of July, I received from the President, the *letter and views* " (which he had promised).

The package was of formidable dimensions, consisting of more than two hundred pages of manuscript. The important documents were two in number, namely, a letter from the President, giving an outline of the financial system proposed to be substituted for the one then in use, and a letter of prodigious magnitude, completely unfolding the President's views. The smaller epistle may have been the President's own; the larger one was the production of Mr. Kendall: but both were signed, Andrew Jackson. In the paper by Mr. Kendall the history of the war against the bank was related, and various reasons were given for the measure contemplated. The main reason advanced was, that the people had re-elected General Jackson distinctly on the bank issue, and that he owed it to the people to complete the work of destroying the bank which the veto had begun. The President's own letter informed Mr. Duane what the President desired him to do. It should be read with particular attention.

## GENERAL JACKSON TO MR. DUANE.

" Boston, June 26th, 1838.

" . . . . It is, in my opinion, desirable that you should appoint a discreet agent to proceed forthwith, with proper credentials from your department, to the cities of Baltimore, Philadelphia, and Boston, to consult with the Presidents and Directors of State banks, in those cities, upon the practicability of making an arrangement with them, or some of them, upon something like the following terms, viz. :

" 1st. That one bank be selected in Baltimore, one in Philadelphia, two in New York, and one in Boston, with a right, on the part of the government, to add one in Savannah, one in Charleston, S. C., one in the State of Alabama, one in New Orleans, and one in Norfolk, upon their acceding to the terms proposed, which shall receive the deposits in those places respectively, *and* be responsible to the government for the whole public deposits of the United States.

" 2d. That these banks shall have the right, by a convention of their presidents or otherwise, to select all the banks, at other points throughout the United States, in which the public money shall be deposited, with an absolute negative by the Secretary of the Treasury.

" 3d. That the Secretary of the Treasury shall have power to discontinue the deposits in any bank or banks, or break up the whole arrangement, whenever he may think proper ; he giving, in such case, the longest notice of his intention to do so which the public interest may admit of.

" 4th. That the primary and secondary banks shall make returns of their entire condition, to the Secretary of the Treasury, monthly, and as much oftener as he may require, and report to the Treasurer weekly the state of his deposits ; and that they will also submit themselves to a critical examination of their books and transactions by the Secretary of the Treasury, or an authorized agent, whenever the Secretary may require it.

" 5th. That the arrangement of the government be only with the primary banks, which shall be responsible to it, not only for the safety of the entire deposits, wherever made, but for making payments at any places in the United States, without charge to the government, in gold and silver, or its equivalent, of any sum which may be required there to be paid by the Secretary of the Treasury ; that they shall also pay any expenses that may attend the removal of the deposits, as also the compensation and expenses of any agent, temporary or permanent, whom the Secretary may appoint to examine into their affairs.

" 6th. That they will render, or cause to be rendered, without charge, any service which can now be lawfully required of the Bank of the United States.

" 7th. It would be inconvenient to employ all the State banks in good credit, at the places designated for the location of the primary banks ; but

it is, nevertheless, extremely desirable to secure their good will and friendly coöperation. The importance of that object is too obvious to require elucidation. It is supposed it might be accomplished by an arrangement between the primary banks and the other institutions in their immediate vicinity, by which, in consideration of an assumption by them of a share of the responsibilities assumed by the primary banks, an equitable share, all circumstances considered, of the benefits of the public deposits, would be secured to the institutions referred to. This might be done by allowing them, respectively, a credit at the selected banks equal to their share of the deposits, taking into view the amount of capital, the trouble of the primary banks, and all other circumstances entitled to consideration. If such an arrangement could be made it would increase the actual security of the government, consolidate the entire mass of the mercantile community of the principal cities in favor of the system, and place its success and permanency beyond contingency.

"If the negotiation is, in the first instance, opened with delegations from all the banks in the cities referred to, and them candidly informed of the desire of the government to award facilities and extend equal benefits to all, but that in case of failure to make such an arrangement it would have to select, at its own pleasure, the requisite number, there is reason to hope the arrangement would be brought about. Amos Kendall, Esq., would, in my opinion, be a proper person to be employed in the proposed negotiation. These views will be regarded by you as suggestions for your consideration only, and will, if adopted, without doubt be rendered more complete and effectual by such modifications and additions as may present themselves to your own mind."

Imagine the feelings of a prudent Philadelphian upon reading the details of a scheme so novel, complicated, wild, impossible as this. What bank, well established and self-respecting, could be expected to submit to such espionage, or to assume such responsibilities?

In the same package Mr. Duane received the opinions of the other members of the cabinet upon the measure proposed, and also a brief abstract of the President's own view of the bank question generally. The opinion of the President was given in four propositions: First, the present bank charter ought not to be renewed on any conditions whatever. Secondly, there should be no Bank of the United States out of the District of Columbia. Thirdly, the President of the United States, if a new national bank were chartered, should

have the appointing of its president, and a certain number of its directors. Fourthly, no bank should be recommended until the proposed State bank system had been tried and found inadequate. We are tempted to infer from these propositions, what the opposition asserted in 1832 and 1833, that the real object of the politicians who influenced General Jackson was, not to rid the country of a monstrous monopoly, but to add to the sum, already prodigious and alarming, of governmental patronage.

Mr. Duane promptly replied to the President's communications. He told the President that he was opposed to the new fiscal scheme utterly. He thought it unjust to deprive the Bank of the United States of the deposits, because the bank paid the government a stipulated sum per annum for the use of the deposits. "Their continuance is part of the contract" between the bank and the government. Their removal, he thought, would be most disrespectful to Congress, inasmuch as the House had declared the deposits safe in the keeping of the bank, by a vote of one hundred and nine to forty, and this so recently as the last session. Nor did he think that State banks of the first standing would accept the deposits on the conditions proposed; and in no others would the public money be safe. *Could not the government dispense entirely with the assistance of banks?* Perhaps it could not. But he was of opinion that a matter so important as a radical change in the fiscal policy of the country was one which Congress alone had authority to regulate. Ere long Congress would be compelled, by the near expiration of the bank charter, to deliberate on the subject. To Congress it belonged; to Congress it should be left. Moreover, if the State bank system failed, and Mr. Duane believed it would fail, the Bank of the United States would come before the country with an argument so plausible and convincing that it would probably be able to secure a renewal of its charter. In the course of his remarks, Mr. Duane alluded with some feeling to the officious, and apparently authorized





differ in opinion, what of it? It is but opinion, after all; and I like you the better for telling me frankly what you think.'

"He then alluded to passages in my letter which had a reference to Congress and the judiciary, and deprecated any reliance whatever upon either. He said it would be idle to resort to a court which had decided that the very bills which Congress had prohibited were legal; that there was but one course—to use the power possessed by the executive.

"I replied that we differed upon one point only. That he had asked me, upon my responsibility to Congress, to remove the deposits; and that I could not remove them without violating what I considered my duty; that on all other points I agreed with him, and was ready to go hand in hand to provide a substitute for the United States Bank.

"'Sir,' said he, 'I addressed you as Secretary of the Treasury, and told you to use my letter as your shield.'

"'You called on me, sir,' I replied, 'to exercise a power conferred on me by law; and you said you did not mean to interfere with the independent exercise of it. You called on me to do an act for which I might be impeached; and if I comply, your letter will be no protection, for, in effect, it tells me I may do as I please. The very circumstance that you disclaim the exercise of control over me, would forbid my holding your letter up as a shield.'

"The President here remarked that I did not understand that part of his letter to which I alluded, but, instead of explaining it, he said:

"'I am preparing a reply to your communication, and ask you to read it attentively. I am disposed to confide in you, and to be your friend, and if anybody tells you otherwise, don't believe him.'

"I said I felt myself worthy of his confidence; that I had come to speak of a substitute for the present fiscal agent; that if the United States Bank were to be soon closed, I did not apprehend evil as to the public funds or operations; that the funds of the government in the former United States Bank remained there until a few days before it expired; that nearly three years must elapse ere the doors of the present bank would be shut; that, in my letter, I had suggested a relinquishment of all bank agency, but that time for inquiry and reflection, as to the plan of a substitute, was indispensable; that I doubted whether a provision for fiscal operations could or ought to be made, without inquiry into the condition of the general currency; that a regulation of commerce, and a control over bank paper, seemed to be demanded; that legislators alone could duly investigate such important subjects; that I had no confidence in the competency of State banks for fiscal purposes; and that an extension of patronage to them would only increase evils already too great.

"The President said he had already declared against delay, and why there should be none; that there might be, as I supposed, abuses, but there

were other and greater abuses: that to wait for inquiry would give a triumph to the bank: that State institutions were now our only resource; that he had himself asked Congress so to organize the treasury department as to dispense with banks, but that he had not been attended to, by Congress or the people."

The interview then terminated. The President replied to Mr. Duane's elaborate argument of July 10th in a letter not less elaborate, and Mr. Duane rejoined in a masterly paper on the 19th of the same month. Neither of these letters produced the slightest effect upon the individuals to whom they were addressed. Mr. Duane firmly maintained his ground, and the President (need I say it?) firmly held to his purpose. Other interviews followed.

"I waited upon the President," says the Secretary of the Treasury, "twice on the 19th and again on the 20th of July, and at those interviews the same course of argument was pursued. I desired to bring the President to a point, and that was not easily effected. At last he said:

"I want to press no man's conscience. My wish is to meet Congress with a declaration that we have a safe substitute for the United States Bank. How can we do this without inquiry? I desire Mr. Kendall to make that inquiry. I doubt whether the State banks will come into my plan of mutual guarantee, which I consider the only safe one; but we must try. For one, I shall be for positively removing the deposits, if the three per cents. shall not be given up by the bank in October. But the law gives you the power; the act must be yours. What, however, I want is *inquiry*, not to *make* arrangement. Information ought to be got even for Congress, and it is through you it should be collected. Now, do you understand me? Until we get information, and consider it, we shall remain uncommitted."

"I supposed that I now understood the President, and even began to flatter myself that I had gained a point. I understood him, that there was to be a fair inquiry such as the importance of the object demanded; that the information needful in such a case was to be collected; and that, until

such information should be collected and considered, there was to be no commitment ; that my own sense of duty was not to be interfered with ; and that, if the United States Bank should deliver up the three per cents. in October, a removal of the deposits would not be pressed upon me. Under these impressions, and far from suspecting that the basis on which they rested had been insincerely laid, or would be faithlessly changed, I prepared a letter of instruction" (for the guidance of Mr. Kendall in his proposed tour of inquiry).

The letter of instructions directed INQUIRY ONLY. Mr. Kendall was to visit the principal cities, converse with bankers, and ascertain whether the President's plan could be carried out—whether respectable banks would accept the deposits on the terms proposed by the President in his letter to Mr. Duane of June 26th. The closing paragraph of Mr. Duane's letter of instructions was the following : " Having thus, sir, placed before you the views of the President, and such suggestions on my own part as seemed to be called for, it becomes my duty to myself, in order to guard against expectations, on the part of the banks, that may not be realized, or misapprehension elsewhere, distinctly to say that my performance of the present act of duty, as an executive agent, is not to be understood as an indication of any intention on my part, under existing circumstances, to exercise the power vested in me by law. Whether such an emergency may not arise as may warrant the exercise of that power, it is unnecessary now to anticipate ; it is sufficient to observe, that, in my opinion, *none such exists at present.*"

To these words the President strongly objected. " Why send Mr. Kendall about the country to inquire, if no necessity for action exists ?" he asked. " Previously to inquiry," wrote the President, " you declare that nothing has yet occurred to render necessary the movement anticipated by it, and thus leave me to infer that should the inquiry establish the competency of the State banks to perform the agency proposed to them, you will not feel yourself at liberty to carry into effect the decision transferring the public deposits

to them, which, the President, on advisement with his cabinet, may make. Please inform me whether I am correct in supposing that this is your determination. If I am, it will then be my duty, in frankness and candor, to suggest the course which will be necessary on my part."

Mr. Duane says : " I considered this letter not only a violation of the assurance given in the President's letter from Boston, that he did not mean to interfere with the independent exercise of the discretion conferred on me by law, but a palpable infringement of the agreement, admitted in the above letter itself, that there was to be no present commitment. The construction put upon the concluding paragraph of the draft of instructions was forced and unwarranted. That paragraph simply stated, in writing, what the above letter itself shows had been agreed upon orally, that there was to be no present commitment. The question of the actual removal of the deposits had been reserved ; and yet, the above letter demanded a commitment at once. These, and other manifestations of bad faith, gave me much uneasiness. My inclination, therefore, was to refuse to omit the paragraph objected to. It occurred to me, however, that but one change was proposed ; that the instructions still required the agent to collect information ; and that, if fairly collected, such information must disabuse the President himself."

So Mr. Duane consented to the omission of the obnoxious paragraph. He gave the President distinctly to understand, however, that he held himself entirely uncommitted as to the final decision of the question. " All that I can promise," he said, " consistently with the respect due to you as well as myself, is, that, when the moment for decision, after inquiry and discussion, shall arrive, *I will concur with you, or retire.*"

Surely, *now* Mr. Kendall will be able to start upon his important journey. Not yet. The President returned the draft of instructions to Mr. Duane accompanied by the civillest of civil notes. " Your last," said the President, " manifests a spirit, which, I trust, will enable us, before the time

arrives for acting upon the report of the agent, to agree as nearly as may be desirable in the decision which may be made on the subject. I return you herewith the draft of the instructions, with some notes, suggesting a few changes, which you will doubtless see no impropriety in adopting, leaving out the last paragraph."

These "changes," Mr. Duane found, were neither "few" nor unimportant. The "the material parts" of his manuscript "were erased and changed." After much reflection, though strongly tempted to resign at once, he concluded to make the changes desired by the President. "The mission of an agent to make inquiry," he says, "I had no right to resist ; nor could I dictate what should or should not be the nature of his inquiry. It was only as to the removal of the deposits, that I could exercise an independent discretion." The instructions were completed, therefore, and the agent took his departure. A month elapsed before his return, during which the perplexed secretary enjoyed comparative repose.

Late in the month of August, Mr. Kendall had completed his inquiries and his report. "His mission," Mr. Duane assures us, "was abortive in the particulars which had been deemed essential. The plan of bank agency, which the President had considered the only safe one, was, I believe, unanimously rejected. The answers of some of the banks willing to act, showed that they ought not to be trusted. Several of the most substantial institutions refused to act as fiscal agents, under any circumstances. The materials from which the condition of the banks was to be ascertained, had been very imperfectly furnished. Some of the banks answered, that the proposed plans were impracticable. Others pointed out the fallacy of the means suggested for the security of the public money. Others denied that State banks could give such facilities as government required. The banks, most ready to become depositories, showed the least ability to pay their own responsibilities in coin. Yet it was into this chaos that I was asked to plunge the fiscal concerns of the country,

at a moment when they were conducted by the legitimate agent with the utmost simplicity, safety, and dispatch."

Col. Benton attributes the reluctance of the State banks to their terror of the Monster. "Instead of a competition among the banks," he says, "to obtain the deposits, there was holding off, and an absolute refusal on the part of many. Local banks were shy of receiving them—shy of receiving the greatest possible apparent benefit to themselves—shy of receiving the aliment upon which they lived and grew! and why this so great apparent contradiction? It was the fear of the Bank of the United States! and of that capacity to destroy them to which Mr. Biddle had testified in his answers to the Senate's Finance Committee; and which capacity was now known to be joined to the will; for the bank placed in the same category all who should be concerned in the removal—both the government that had ordered it, and the local banks which received what it lost. *But a competent number were found*; and this first attempt to prevent a removal by preventing a reception of the deposits elsewhere, entirely failed."

After receiving Mr. Kendall's report, the President called a Cabinet council, which convened on the 10th of September. The President, on this occasion, spoke at some length and with great energy:

"Gentlemen," he began, "I have got here (holding up a paper) the report of the agent on the deposit question, and I want to call your attention to it. The first question is, whether the State banks are safe places to put the public moneys in. The next is, whether, if they are, it is not our duty to put them there—whether we are not called upon, by the late disclosures of the corrupt conduct of the United States Bank, to cast off the connection at once. This is an important business. You know I have long had it in agitation, and what took place in Congress. I deemed it my duty to ask your opinions; and, although I mentioned to Mr. Duane that the subject was under consideration, I must, in justice to myself, as well as to him, say, I did not think it proper, before his appointment, to explain to him my views. But after doing so, I did think it due to our country that we should go on. The present is a most serious state of things. How shall we answer to God, our country, or ourselves, if we

permit the public money to be thus used to corrupt the people? Observe, I do not want immediate action, but I desire a day to be fixed. Nor do I want to touch a dollar of the money that is in the bank; but I do want that the money coming in may be put where it will be safe, and not used for purposes of so infamous a kind. I want harmony in my Cabinet. I am well pleased with you all. I want to go unitedly in this solemn duty. The former conduct of the bank, in its corrupt loans, in its attempts to depreciate the credit of the country, in its whole corrupt state, justified our acting; but the last disclosures leave us no excuse for further delay. The country will reproach us if we do not go on. By the last resolution of the bank, the whole of its funds may be employed for corrupt purposes; and remember, that, for a part of the sum spent, no explanation or voucher is given; that it was by accident one of the directors, Mr. Wager,\* noticed this monstrous abuse. And give me leave to tell you that this is a small part, could the truth be got at. I anxiously desire, then, that we should at least do something. This report, if you put confidence in it—and I think you may—shows the readiness of the State banks to take the public money, and their ability and safety as substitutes for the present agent. Why, then, should we hesitate? Why not proceed, I say, as the country expects us to do? Here are the papers. When you have read them let us come to an understanding.”

As soon as the President had concluded, Mr. Duane thanked him for explaining to the cabinet the circumstances of his appointment. The President handed to Mr. McLane the report and papers of Mr. Kendall, and the council was at an end.

\* Mr. Peter Wager was one of the five government directors of the bank, nominated by the President of the United States. They kept General Jackson well supplied with information respecting the proceedings of the board of directors, and were called, therefore, by the friends of the bank, *spies*. The “last disclosures,” referred to by the President, may be gathered from the following passage of a Report which had recently been furnished the President by four of the government directors: “On the 30th November, 1830, it is stated on the minutes, that ‘the president submitted to the board a copy of an article on banks and currency, just published in the *American Quarterly Review*, of this city, containing a favorable notice of this institution, and suggested the expediency of making the views of the author more extensively known to the public than they can be by means of the subscription list.’ Whereupon, it was, on motion, ‘*Resolved*, That the president be authorized to take such measures, in regard to the circulation of the contents of the said article, either in whole or in part, as he may deem most for the interests of the bank.’ ”

visit of Reuben M. Whitney—a man not esteemed by Philadelphians.

The Secretary enforced and illustrated his opinions at great length, and with much spirit and ability. His letter was the production of a gentleman and a man of honor, modest, respectful, affectionate even, but resolute. As the President had then returned from his Northern tour, the Secretary delivered his epistle in person, and received a reply a few hours after.

General Jackson pounced like a hawk upon the cardinal defect of Mr. Duane's eloquent paper. "You object to *my* plan," said the General, in substance, "but you propose none of your own! If this affair is to be settled by Congress, I, the President of the United States, will be expected to recommend a new fiscal system for its consideration. Now, what have you to suggest? Think over the subject, my dear sir, and let me see you soon at the White House."

"I waited on the President," continues Mr. Duane, "on the 15th of July. He commenced the conversation by saying that he had read my letter of the 10th of July (then lying on the table before him), and feared we did not understand each other.

"*'My object, sir,'* said he, *'is to save the country; and it will be lost, if we permit the bank to exist. We must prepare a substitute, or our friends in Congress will not know what to do. I do justice to your motives, but some parts of your letter gave me uneasiness. One part only I will mention: that referring to Mr. Whitney. I am sorry you put that in, for he is not in my confidence. He is an abused man, sir, and has much information of which Mr. Polk and I have availed ourselves, but he can not be called my confidant. I was sorry to see his name introduced, and don't see that your argument needed it.'*

"I replied that I had been accustomed to write freely and without disguise; that, in the present instance, I had barely stated facts: that I had been unused to official correspondence; that, I confessed, I had been mortified at the approaches of Mr. Whitney, and when I felt strongly I wrote so; that I meant no disrespect to the President, however, and as its omission would not affect the rest of my letter, I would at once strike out the passage relating to Mr. Whitney. Suiting the action to the word, I took up a pen and struck out two or three lines.

"*'Now,'* said the President, *'we are friends, and should be so. If we*



differ in opinion, what of it? It is but opinion, after all; and I like you the better for telling me frankly what you think.'

"He then alluded to passages in my letter which had a reference to Congress and the judiciary, and deprecated any reliance whatever upon either. He said it would be idle to resort to a court which had decided that the very bills which Congress had prohibited were legal; that there was but one course—to use the power possessed by the executive.

"I replied that we differed upon one point only. That he had asked me, upon my responsibility to Congress, to remove the deposits; and that I could not remove them without violating what I considered my duty; that on all other points I agreed with him, and was ready to go hand in hand to provide a substitute for the United States Bank.

"‘Sir,’ said he, ‘I addressed you as Secretary of the Treasury, and told you to use my letter as your shield.’

"‘You called on me, sir,’ I replied, ‘to exercise a power conferred on me by law; and you said you did not mean to interfere with the independent exercise of it. You called on me to do an act for which I might be impeached; and if I comply, your letter will be no protection, for, in effect, it tells me I may do as I please. The very circumstance that you disclaim the exercise of control over me, would forbid my holding your letter up as a shield.’

"The President here remarked that I did not understand that part of his letter to which I alluded, but, instead of explaining it, he said:

"‘I am preparing a reply to your communication, and ask you to read it attentively. I am disposed to confide in you, and to be your friend, and if anybody tells you otherwise, don't believe him.’

"I said I felt myself worthy of his confidence; that I had come to speak of a substitute for the present fiscal agent; that if the United States Bank were to be soon closed, I did not apprehend evil as to the public funds or operations; that the funds of the government in the former United States Bank remained there until a few days before it expired; that nearly three years must elapse ere the doors of the present bank would be shut; that, in my letter, I had suggested a relinquishment of all bank agency, but that time for inquiry and reflection, as to the plan of a substitute, was indispensable; that I doubted whether a provision for fiscal operations could or ought to be made, without inquiry into the condition of the general currency; that a regulation of commerce, and a control over bank paper, seemed to be demanded; that legislators alone could duly investigate such important subjects; that I had no confidence in the competency of State banks for fiscal purposes; and that an extension of patronage to them would only increase evils already too great.

"The President said he had already declared against delay, and why there should be none; that there might be, as I supposed, abuses, but there

were other and greater abuses: that to wait for inquiry would give a triumph to the bank: that State institutions were now our only resource: that he had himself asked Congress so to organize the treasury department as to dispense with banks, but that he had not been attended to by Congress or the people."

The interview then terminated. The President replied to Mr. Duane's elaborate argument of July 10th in a letter not less elaborate, and Mr. Duane rejoined in a masterly paper on the 19th of the same month. Neither of these letters produced the slightest effect upon the individuals to whom they were addressed. Mr. Duane firmly maintained his ground, and the President (need I say it?) firmly held to his purpose. Other interviews followed.

"I waited upon the President," says the Secretary of the Treasury, "twice on the 19th and again on the 20th of July, and at those interviews the same course of argument was pursued. I desired to bring the President to a point, and that was not easily effected. At last he said:

"I want to press no man's conscience. My wish is to meet Congress with a declaration that we have a safe substitute for the United States Bank. How can we do this without inquiry? I desire Mr. Kendall to make that inquiry. I doubt whether the State banks will come into my plan of mutual guarantee, which I consider the only safe one; but we must try. For one, I shall be for positively removing the deposits, if the three per cents. shall not be given up by the bank in October. But the law gives you the power; the act must be yours. What, however, I want is *inquiry*, not to *make* arrangement. Information ought to be got even for Congress, and it is through you it should be collected. Now, do you understand me? Until we get information, and consider it, we shall remain uncommitted."

"I supposed that I now understood the President, and even began to flatter myself that I had gained a point. I understood him, that there was to be a fair inquiry such as the importance of the object demanded; that the information needful in such a case was to be collected; and that, until

such information should be collected and considered, there was to be no commitment ; that my own sense of duty was not to be interfered with ; and that, if the United States Bank should deliver up the three per cents. in October, a removal of the deposits would not be pressed upon me. Under these impressions, and far from suspecting that the basis on which they rested had been insincerely laid, or would be faithlessly changed, I prepared a letter of instruction" (for the guidance of Mr. Kendall in his proposed tour of inquiry).

The letter of instructions directed INQUIRY ONLY. Mr. Kendall was to visit the principal cities, converse with bankers, and ascertain whether the President's plan could be carried out—whether respectable banks would accept the deposits on the terms proposed by the President in his letter to Mr. Duane of June 26th. The closing paragraph of Mr. Duane's letter of instructions was the following : " Having thus, sir, placed before you the views of the President, and such suggestions on my own part as seemed to be called for, it becomes my duty to myself, in order to guard against expectations, on the part of the banks, that may not be realized, or misapprehension elsewhere, distinctly to say that my performance of the present act of duty, as an executive agent, is not to be understood as an indication of any intention on my part, under existing circumstances, to exercise the power vested in me by law. Whether such an emergency may not arise as may warrant the exercise of that power, it is unnecessary now to anticipate ; it is sufficient to observe, that, in my opinion, *none such exists at present.*"

To these words the President strongly objected. " Why send Mr. Kendall about the country to inquire, if no necessity for action exists ?" he asked. " Previously to inquiry," wrote the President, " you declare that nothing has yet occurred to render necessary the movement anticipated by it, and thus leave me to infer that should the inquiry establish the competency of the State banks to perform the agency proposed to them, you will not feel yourself at liberty to carry into effect the decision transferring the public deposits

to them, which, the President, on advisement with his cabinet, may make. Please inform me whether I am correct in supposing that this is your determination. If I am, it will then be my duty, in frankness and candor, to suggest the course which will be necessary on my part."

Mr. Duane says : " I considered this letter not only a violation of the assurance given in the President's letter from Boston, that he did not mean to interfere with the independent exercise of the discretion conferred on me by law, but a palpable infringement of the agreement, admitted in the above letter itself, that there was to be no present commitment. The construction put upon the concluding paragraph of the draft of instructions was forced and unwarranted. That paragraph simply stated, in writing, what the above letter itself shows had been agreed upon orally, that there was to be no present commitment. The question of the actual removal of the deposits had been reserved ; and yet, the above letter demanded a commitment at once. These, and other manifestations of bad faith, gave me much uneasiness. My inclination, therefore, was to refuse to omit the paragraph objected to. It occurred to me, however, that but one change was proposed ; that the instructions still required the agent to collect information ; and that, if fairly collected, such information must disabuse the President himself."

So Mr. Duane consented to the omission of the obnoxious paragraph. He gave the President distinctly to understand, however, that he held himself entirely uncommitted as to the final decision of the question. " All that I can promise," he said, " consistently with the respect due to you as well as myself, is, that, when the moment for decision, after inquiry and discussion, shall arrive, *I will concur with you, or retire.*"

Surely, *now* Mr. Kendall will be able to start upon his important journey. Not yet. The President returned the draft of instructions to Mr. Duane accompanied by the civillest of civil notes. " Your last," said the President, " manifests a spirit, which, I trust, will enable us, before the time

arrives for acting upon the report of the agent, to agree as nearly as may be desirable in the decision which may be made on the subject. I return you herewith the draft of the instructions, with some notes, suggesting a few changes, which you will doubtless see no impropriety in adopting, leaving out the last paragraph."

These "changes," Mr. Duane found, were neither "few" nor unimportant. The "the material parts" of his manuscript "were erased and changed." After much reflection, though strongly tempted to resign at once, he concluded to make the changes desired by the President. "The mission of an agent to make inquiry," he says, "I had no right to resist; nor could I dictate what should or should not be the nature of his inquiry. It was only as to the removal of the deposits, that I could exercise an independent discretion." The instructions were completed, therefore, and the agent took his departure. A month elapsed before his return, during which the perplexed secretary enjoyed comparative repose.

Late in the month of August, Mr. Kendall had completed his inquiries and his report. "His mission," Mr. Duane assures us, "was abortive in the particulars which had been deemed essential. The plan of bank agency, which the President had considered the only safe one, was, I believe, unanimously rejected. The answers of some of the banks willing to act, showed that they ought not to be trusted. Several of the most substantial institutions refused to act as fiscal agents, under any circumstances. The materials from which the condition of the banks was to be ascertained, had been very imperfectly furnished. Some of the banks answered, that the proposed plans were impracticable. Others pointed out the fallacy of the means suggested for the security of the public money. Others denied that State banks could give such facilities as government required. The banks, most ready to become depositories, showed the least ability to pay their own responsibilities in coin. Yet it was into this chaos that I was asked to plunge the fiscal concerns of the country,

at a moment when they were conducted by the legitimate agent with the utmost simplicity, safety, and dispatch."

Col. Benton attributes the reluctance of the State banks to their terror of the Monster. "Instead of a competition among the banks," he says, "to obtain the deposits, there was holding off, and an absolute refusal on the part of many. Local banks were shy of receiving them—shy of receiving the greatest possible apparent benefit to themselves—shy of receiving the aliment upon which they lived and grew! and why this so great apparent contradiction? It was the fear of the Bank of the United States! and of that capacity to destroy them to which Mr. Biddle had testified in his answers to the Senate's Finance Committee; and which capacity was now known to be joined to the will; for the bank placed in the same category all who should be concerned in the removal—both the government that had ordered it, and the local banks which received what it lost. *But a competent number were found*; and this first attempt to prevent a removal by preventing a reception of the deposits elsewhere, entirely failed."

After receiving Mr. Kendall's report, the President called a Cabinet council, which convened on the 10th of September. The President, on this occasion, spoke at some length and with great energy:

"Gentlemen," he began, "I have got here (holding up a paper) the report of the agent on the deposit question, and I want to call your attention to it. The first question is, whether the State banks are safe places to put the public moneys in. The next is, whether, if they are, it is not our duty to put them there—whether we are not called upon, by the late disclosures of the corrupt conduct of the United States Bank, to cast off the connection at once. This is an important business. You know I have long had it in agitation, and what took place in Congress. I deemed it my duty to ask your opinions; and, although I mentioned to Mr. Duane that the subject was under consideration, I must, in justice to myself, as well as to him, say, I did not think it proper, before his appointment, to explain to him my views. But after doing so, I did think it due to our country that we should go on. The present is a most serious state of things. How shall we answer to God, our country, or ourselves, if we

permit the public money to be thus used to corrupt the people? Observe, I do not want immediate action, but I desire a day to be fixed. Nor do I want to touch a dollar of the money that is in the bank; but I do want that the money coming in may be put where it will be safe, and not used for purposes of so infamous a kind. I want harmony in my Cabinet. I am well pleased with you all. I want to go unitedly in this solemn duty. The former conduct of the bank, in its corrupt loans, in its attempts to depreciate the credit of the country, in its whole corrupt state, justified our acting; but the last disclosures leave us no excuse for further delay. The country will reproach us if we do not go on. By the last resolution of the bank, the whole of its funds may be employed for corrupt purposes; and remember, that, for a part of the sum spent, no explanation or voucher is given; that it was by accident one of the directors, Mr. Wager,\* noticed this monstrous abuse. And give me leave to tell you that this is a small part, could the truth be got at. I anxiously desire, then, that we should at least do something. This report, if you put confidence in it—and I think you may—shows the readiness of the State banks to take the public money, and their ability and safety as substitutes for the present agent. Why, then, should we hesitate? Why not proceed, I say, as the country expects us to do? Here are the papers. When you have read them let us come to an understanding.”

As soon as the President had concluded, Mr. Duane thanked him for explaining to the cabinet the circumstances of his appointment. The President handed to Mr. McLane the report and papers of Mr. Kendall, and the council was at an end.

\* Mr. Peter Wager was one of the five government directors of the bank, nominated by the President of the United States. They kept General Jackson well supplied with information respecting the proceedings of the board of directors, and were called, therefore, by the friends of the bank, *spies*. The “last disclosures,” referred to by the President, may be gathered from the following passage of a Report which had recently been furnished the President by four of the government directors: “On the 30th November, 1830, it is stated on the minutes, that ‘the president submitted to the board a copy of an article on banks and currency, just published in the *American Quarterly Review*, of this city, containing a favorable notice of this institution, and suggested the expediency of making the views of the author more extensively known to the public than they can be by means of the subscription list.’ Whereupon, it was, on motion, ‘*Resolved*, That the president be authorized to take such measures, in regard to the circulation of the contents of the said article, either in whole or in part, as he may deem most for the interests of the bank.’ ”

A week passed before the cabinet again convened ; during which the *Globe* and other administration papers began to assail the character and motives of Mr. Duane, as if to prepare the public mind for his dismissal. The Secretary called the attention of the President to these simultaneous attacks. "It is impossible," says Mr. Duane, "to describe the earnestness of the President's professions in reply. He declared that no one had attempted to shake his confidence ; that it remained as it ever had been ; that he regretted even a difference in opinion between us ; and that he would put all doubts at rest by conferring on me the highest appointment then at his disposal. This he mentioned twice in the course of our conversation, saying he had meditated a change from one honorable station to another, not only as an act proper in itself, but in order to do what would be satisfactory to myself and friends."

On the seventeenth of September the cabinet again assembled. "The President opened the proceedings," Mr. Duane tells us, "by saying that he trusted advantage had been taken of the time which had passed since the preceding meeting, maturely to consider what he had then said. Then, addressing himself to the Secretary of State, he asked his opinion as to the propriety of a speedy change of the place of public deposit. Mr. McLane at once proceeded to state his objections, in detail, in an emphatic and lucid manner. When the Secretary of State had closed, the President put the same question to me ; and I simply answered, that I desired to have the whole subject presented in the clearest light before Congress—that I had full confidence in their desire as well as ability to correct abuses, and avert the mischiefs referred to by the President—that I deprecated the proposed connection with State banks—and apprehended serious evils to the public in case the contemplated change should be made. The Secretary at War (Governor Cass), when appealed to, said, "You know, sir, I have always thought that the matter rests entirely with the Secretary of the Treasury." The Secretary of the Navy (Governor Woodbury) entered into an



explanation of the opinion which he had given in April against a removal of the deposits prior to the summer of 1834. Although he had then considered an earlier change injudicious, he must now go with the President. The Attorney-General (Mr. Taney) barely said, that he had been from the beginning for an immediate change, and was now more than ever for it. The President then said, 'Gentlemen, I desire to meet you to-morrow, and will then make known my own views.' "

The cabinet met on the morrow. It was at this meeting that the President caused to be read the paper known to history as "the Paper read to the Cabinet on the eighteenth of September." In this document the President recapitulated the history of the war upon the bank, recounted the charges against it, repeated at great length the reasons for the removal of the deposits, and concluded by announcing that the removal was resolved upon, and that he, the President, assumed the entire responsibility of the act. The closing paragraph contained the whole paper : "The President again repeats, that he begs his cabinet to consider the proposed measure as his own, in the support of which he shall require no one of them to make a sacrifice of opinion or principle. Its responsibility has been assumed, after the most mature deliberation and reflection, as necessary to preserve the morals of the people, the freedom of the press, and the purity of the elective franchise, without which, all will unite in saying, that the blood and treasure expended by our forefathers in the establishment of our happy system of government, will have been vain and fruitless. Under these convictions, he feels that a measure so important to the American people can not be commenced too soon, and he therefore names the first day of October next as a period proper for the change of the deposits, or sooner, provided the necessary arrangements with the State banks can be made."

When this paper had been read, the members of the cabinet offered neither remonstrance nor remark, but began in silence to prepare for their departure. "As those present

were retiring," continues the Secretary of the Treasury, "I approached the President, and asked him to allow me to take and read his exposition. He directed his secretary to deliver it to me. I then asked the President, whether I was to understand him as directing me to remove the deposits? He replied, that it was his desire that I should remove them, but upon *his* responsibility; adding with great emphasis, that, 'If I would stand by him it would be the happiest day of his life.'"

All the rest of that day the secretary sat brooding over the posture of affairs, questioning within himself whether it were right even to keep his promise of resigning his place in case he could not agree with the President. His resignation, he well knew, would not retard for a day the consummation of the President's unalterable purpose. Ought not the President to assume the additional responsibility of removing him?

Early the next morning, the President sent to inquire whether he had made up his mind. He answered that he would make known his decision on the day after the morrow. An hour or two later, Major Donelson called, and informed Mr. Duane that the President had determined to announce in the *Globe* of the next day, that the government would cease to deposit the public money in the Bank of the United States on the 1st of October. Astounded at this intelligence, Mr. Duane instantly wrote and dispatched to the President a remonstrance against the publication. The *Globe* of the next morning, however, contained the announcement.

Upon reading the paragraph in the *Globe*, Mr. Duane repaired to the White House, carrying in his pocket a letter, retracting his promise to resign, and positively refusing to order the change in the fiscal system announced in the official newspaper. The conversation which he had with the President on this occasion, Mr. Duane thus records:

*Secretary.* "I have, at length, waited upon you, sir, with this letter."

*President.* "What is it?"

*Secretary.* "It respectfully and finally makes known my decision, not to remove the deposits, or resign."

*President.* "Then you do not mean that we shall part as friends."

*Secretary.* "The reverse, sir, is my desire; but I must protect myself."

*President.* "But you said you would retire, if we could not finally agree."

*Secretary.* "I indiscreetly said so, sir; but I am now compelled to take this course."

*President.* "I have been under an impression that you would resign, even as an act of friendship to me."

*Secretary.* "Personal wishes, sir, must give way. The true question is, which must I observe, my promise to execute my duty faithfully, or my agreement to retire, when the latter conflicts with the former?"

*President.* "I certainly never expected that any such difficulties could arise between us; and think you ought still to consider the matter."

*Secretary.* "I have painfully considered it; and hope you will not ask me to make a sacrifice. All that you need is a successor, and him you may have at once."

*President.* "But I do not wish to dismiss you. I have too much regard for yourself, your family, and friends, to take that course."

*Secretary.* "Excuse me, sir, you may only do now what you said in your letter of the 22d of July, it would be your duty to do, if I then said I would not thereafter remove the deposits."

*President.* "It would be at any time disagreeable to do what might be injurious to you."

*Secretary.* "A resignation, I think, would be more injurious. And permit me to say, that the publication in yesterday's *Globe* removes all delicacy. A worm if trodden upon will turn. I am assailed in all the leading papers of the administration, and if my friend, you will not tie up my hands."

*President.* "Then, I suppose you mean to come out against me."

*Secretary.* "Nothing is further from my thoughts. I barely desire to do what is now my duty; and to defend myself if assailed hereafter."

[Here the President expatiated on the late disclosures in relation to the bank, the corruptibility of Congress, etc., and at length, taking a paper from his drawer, said:]

*President.* "You have been all along mistaken in your views. Here is a paper that will show you your obligations; that the executive must protect you."

*Secretary.* "I will read it, sir, if such is your wish; but I can not anticipate a change of opinion."

*President.* "A secretary, sir, is merely an executive agent, a subordinate, and you may say so in self-defense."

*Secretary.* "In this particular case, Congress confers a discretionary power, and requires reasons if I exercise it. Surely this contemplates responsibility on my part."

*President.* "This paper will show you that your doubts are wholly groundless."

*Secretary.* "As to the deposits, allow me, sir, to say my decision is positive. The only question is as to the mode of my retirement."

*President.* "My dear Mr. Duane, we must separate as friends. Far from desiring that you should sustain any injury, you know I have intended to give you the highest appointment now in my gift. You shall have the mission to Russia. I would have settled this matter before, but for the delay or difficulty" (as I understood the President) "in relation to Mr. Buchanan."

*Secretary.* "I am sincerely thankful to you, sir, for your kind disposition, but I beg you to serve me in a way that will be truly pleasing. I desire no new station, and barely wish to leave my present one blameless, or free from apprehension as to the future. Favor me with a written declaration of your desire that I should leave office, as I can not carry out your views as to the deposits, and I will take back this letter" (the one I had just presented).

*President.* "Never have I had any thing that has given me more mortification than this whole business. I had not the smallest notion that we could differ."

*Secretary.* "My principles and opinions, sir, are unchanged. We differ only about time. You are for acting now; I am for waiting for Congress."

*President.* "How often have I told you that Congress can not act until the deposits are removed."

*Secretary.* "I am unable, sir, to change my opinion at will upon that point."

*President.* "You are altogether wrong in your opinion, and I thought Mr. Taney would have convinced you that you are."

*Secretary.* "Mr. Taney, sir, endeavored to prevail on me to adopt his views, but failed. As to the deposits, I barely desired a delay of about ten weeks."

*President.* "Not a day—not an hour; recent disclosures banish all doubt, and I do not see how you can hesitate."

*Secretary.* "I have often stated my reasons. Surely, sir, it is enough that were I to act, I could not give reasons satisfactory to myself."

*President.* "My reasons, lately read in the cabinet, will release you from complaint."

*Secretary.* "I am sorry I can not view the subject in the same light."

Our conversation was further extended, under varying emotions on both sides, but without any change of opinion or decision. At length I retired, leaving the letter.

During the next three days various letters passed between the President and the Secretary, without producing upon either the effect desired. At length, on the twenty-third of September, the President sent a note to Mr. Duane, which concluded with the well-known words: "I feel myself constrained to notify you that your further services as Secretary of the Treasury are no longer required."

On the self-same day, Mr. Roger B. Taney, the Attorney-General, was appointed Secretary of the Treasury. Three days after, he signed the order which directed collectors and other government employés to deposit the public money in the State banks designated in the order. The deed was done.

The vacant attorney-generalship was filled by the appointment of Mr. Benjamin F. Butler, of New York, the townsman, law student, law partner, political pupil, friend and admirer of Mr. Van Buren. The paper read to the cabinet on the eighteenth of September was, soon after, published in the *Globe*, and copied thence into all the leading papers friendly to the administration.

The conduct of Mr. Duane, when the attacks of the administration press had compelled him to make known that conduct, called forth from all parts of the country expressions of approval as warm as they were just. He deserves to be held in lasting remembrance as one of that host of worthies of every age and country who have preserved their honor untarnished amid temptations that appealed with equal power to the weaknesses and to the virtues of human nature. Those are the temptations which men of honor find it hardest to resist. Such as are addressed to their meaner passions, to their ambition, their love of ease, wealth, and credit they can easily resist; but when to these are added the passion-

the solicitations of a friend and benefactor, the entreaties of honored associates and allies, the deliberate arguments of able and trusted chiefs in the law, the claims of a large circle who share the public honors of their relative, and do not always sympathize with the high feeling which seems to lower both him and them in the social scale—then a man must be made of sterling metal, indeed, who holds fast to his integrity. Mr. Duane had every motive, worthy and unworthy, which a public man can ever have to yield to the President's desires. In not yielding, he displayed a genuine, moral heroism.

The organ of the administration at Washington, in commenting upon Mr. Duane's dismissal, used the following language: "Mr. Duane was dismissed for faithlessness to his solemn written pledges, and for the exhibition of bad feeling, which made him totally unfit for the station to which he had been elevated. He was *not* dismissed merely for refusing to remove the deposits."\*

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## CHAPTER XXXVIII.

### THE BANK CURTAILS.

PUGILISTS begin a fight for the championship by shaking hands; but there comes a moment, in the course of the contest, when the man who is going to lose the battle loses his temper. The bank, so courteous and dignified in 1829, lost its temper for a moment, when the "Paper read to the Cabinet on the Eighteenth of September"—a paper replete with accusations against its honor—announced to all the world the removal of the government deposits. The Report published by the directors, in reply to the President's fulmination, spoke of it as "a paper signed Andrew Jackson, purporting

\* Globe, November 19, 1833.

to have been read to a Cabinet." The Report proceeded, however, with moderation and dignity to reply to each of the President's charges of misconduct ; and, so far as one unversed in the mysteries of finance can judge, it refuted those charges, and proved that the bank had been managed honestly, prudently, and successfully.

That it was an error of judgment on the part of the bank to spend fourteen thousand dollars a year in "self-defense," is shown by the utter failure of that expenditure to conciliate the popular mind. Whether the bank was justified in making the expenditure was a question for the stockholders to determine. The United States was a stockholder, and had a right to object. But who will tell us how much money from the treasury of the United States was employed in enabling the administration to obey the law, before laid down in these pages, that every thing in the universe, having in it the principle of life, will do all it can to perpetuate its life ? Mr. Kendall, an employé of the government, was a paid writer for the *Globe* during a great part of its existence as the organ of General Jackson's administration. His salary as special contributor was eight hundred dollars a year. This was fair enough I suppose, as Messrs. Blair and Rives paid the salary. Yet I venture to estimate that the public money transmuted into public opinion during the bank war amounted to a greater sum than the bank expended for a similar purpose during its entire career of twenty years.

In the new posture of affairs the bank was obliged to do more than defend itself against paper bullets. A voice from the bank parlor informs me that, upon learning the intention of the government to remove the deposits, Mr. Biddle and the directors were undecided for some time which of two courses to adopt. To curtail, or not to curtail—that was the question. A friend of Mr. Biddle, a gentleman of note in the financial world, advised him not to curtail ; but to give the country a striking proof of the strength of the bank by rather enlarging its loans than lessening them. This plan, he urged, would also render the sudden cessation of the

bank in 1836 so paralyzing to the business of the country that the people would rise as one man, in the *presidential election* of that year, and hurl from power the party that would be supposed to have arrested the national progress. Mr. Biddle was convinced by this reasoning. A circular letter to the cashiers of the twenty-five branches, ordering them to continue to their customers the usual accommodation, and even, in some cases, to increase their loans, was drawn up by Mr. Biddle. The gentleman before referred to (to whom the reader is indebted for this information) prepared the requisite twenty-five copies of this letter, folded them, superscribed them, and placed them in Mr. Biddle's hands, ready for the mail.

The packet of circulars, however, was not sent to the post-office that evening. Perhaps it occurred to the president of the bank that the policy proposed would effect in 1836 a prostration of business so complete that the capital of the bank would be swallowed up in the general ruin. Whatever the reason may have been, the circulars were put into the fire instead of the mail, and a policy more prudent and obvious was adopted. The amount of public money in the bank on the first of October, 1833, was \$9,891,000. The directors resolved simply to curtail the loans of the bank to the extent of the average amount of public money held by it. This was done. It was done gradually. It was done no faster than the balance of public money diminished. The bank itself tells us, in one of its publications, exactly what it did :

"On the eighth of October, 1833, the bank directed 'that the committee on the offices be authorized to direct such gradual reduction in the amount and the time of the loans, at the respective offices, as may, in their judgment, be made, without inconvenience to the customers of the bank, or the community.' This authority has been executed in such a way as to accomplish its object with the least pressure upon the community ; and the bank sum up their operations in the following manner :

- 1st. That the bank never directed any curtailment of its loans until the actual removal of the deposits.



2d. That the only actual reduction of loans took place from the 1st of October to the 1st of December, when the loans were diminished . . . . .	\$5,641,098 26
While at the same time the public and private deposits were reduced . . . . .	5,887,864 63
3d. That from the 1st of December, 1833, to the 1st of April, 1834, the loans have not been reduced, but, on the contrary, have actually been increasing, and were greater on the 1st of April, 1834, than on the 1st of October, 1833, by . . . . .	353,712 96
While, during that same period, the public deposits had decreased no less than . . . . .	2,239,393 89
4th. That the total reduction of loans from the 1st of October to the 1st of April was . . . . .	5,057,527 22
While the public deposits had been reduced .	\$6,935,568 84
Private deposits, . . . . .	842,834 57
Making an aggregate of . . . . .	7,778,403 41
Being a reduction of loans less, by nearly three millions, than the reduction of deposits.	
5th. That so far from cramping the trade of the country, it has actually purchased, from the 1st of October to the 1st of April, of domestic and foreign bills of exchange, . . . .	34,671,324 00
6th. That the State banks were permitted to be indebted to the bank an average amount of . . . . .	3,464,956 00

This curtailment compelled a similar one on the part of many of the State banks, while the "pet banks," the new depositaries of the public money, had not yet begun to reap the advantages of their position. Hence it was that during the first six months of the operation of the new system, there was a pressure in the money market—sharp, sudden, and severe—which caused many disastrous failures, general consternation, considerable distress, and tremendous outcry. Col. Benton, in many a paragraph of rolling thunder, attributes the whole of this distress and alarm to the criminal contrivance of the monster bank. But he attributes the crash of 1837 to the same cause! He dwells long upon the fact that, as late as fifteen months after the deposits ceased to be made in the bank of the United States, there were still in its vaults three or four millions of the public money. He does not tell us that the contraction of the bank's loans ceased long before that time; nor that the bank could not safely use money

subject to instantaneous call ; nor that the public money was left in the bank for purposes which could be more easily imagined than safely avowed. Can any bank lose an eighth of its available capital without curtailing its business, or running imprudent risks ?

Congress met on the second of December, when the commercial pressure was becoming severe. In his message the President again congratulated the country on the prosperous state of the public finances. Thirty-two millions had been received into the treasury. The expenditures would not exceed twenty-five millions. The public debt had been reduced to an inconsiderable sum, which would soon be discharged ; a fact which the President stated with exultation. The late removal of the deposits was again avowed to be the President's own measure, one which he had " urged upon the department " of the treasury for some months before the deed was done. So certain was it, said the President, that the bank was a corrupt and corrupting political engine, so sure was he that the present commercial panic was needlessly caused by it for the purpose of compelling a restoration of the deposits, that " in my own sphere of duty, I should feel myself called on, by the facts disclosed, to order a *scire facias* against the bank, with a view to put an end to the chartered rights it has so palpably violated, were it not that the charter itself will expire as soon as a decision would probably be obtained from the court of last resort."

The message concluded with a fifth repetition of the recommendation for the abolishment of " every intermediate agency " in the election of President and Vice-President, and that " their eligibility should be limited to one term of either four or six years." The persistent man !

## CHAPTER XXXIX.

## THE PANIC SESSION OF CONGRESS.

THE twenty-third Congress, from the extraordinary number of its members who have filled important stations, has been styled the Star Congress. In the Senate were Webster, Clay, Calhoun, Benton, Wright, Frelinghuysen, Southard, Clayton, Rives, Tyler, Mangum, Preston, Forsyth, Grundy, White, and Poindexter—a galaxy of stars. In the House were Franklin Pierce, Choate, John Quincy Adams, John Davis, Cambreleng, Fillmore, Horace Binney, Stephenson, Henry A. Wise, McDuffie, Richard M. Johnson, John Bell, Cave Johnson, Polk, David Crockett, Corwin, Vinton, Ewing, and C. C. Clay—all well known names. Of the members of this Congress, five have been President ; five, Vice-President ; eight, Secretary of State ; twenty-five, Governor of a State. In the House, on a test question, the administration could rely on a majority. In the Senate, the Opposition could command a majority which was small, but safe and sufficient.

From the first week in December, 1833, to the last day of June, 1834, the ruling—almost the only—topic of debate in Congress, in the newspapers, among the people, was the removal of the deposits. With one exception, no subject has ever been discussed in the United States with so much ability, bitterness, and pertinacity. Indeed, it was the great topic from 1833 to 1842. It lived through the panic of 1834, the inflation of 1835, the madness of 1836, the crash of 1837, the depression of 1838 to 1842, and only received its final quietus in 1844. The result of the discussion was the sub-treasury—a result which might as well have been reached in 1834 as in 1838, if General Jackson had been less precipitate and his advisers more acute. Prodigious as the price was which the country had to pay for the total and final separation of the government from banks, the result was one which the country now feels was worth its price.

During the whole of this eventful session of Congress, a kind of duello was going on between the President and the back party. Blow seemed to be given for blow, and both parties were excited and angry beyond previous example. When all was over, so many hostile and mortifying acts had been done on both sides, that it was uncertain which of the two had had the worst of the contest. To the excitement within the walls of the capital was added a clamor without, which increased in loudness and intensity as the debates proceeded. We are now briefly to review the events of this session.

Thrice in the very first week the President provoked the ire of the opposition. First, in his annual message, which contained offensive passages against the bank. Secondly, in the report of the Secretary of the Treasury, which re-stated those reasons for the removal the deposits with which we are already familiar. Thirdly, by vetoing Mr. Clay's Land Bill, providing for a distribution among the States of the proceeds of the sales of the public lands.

The Land Bill Mr. Clay regarded as one of the conditions of the late compromise. He considered that the administration was bound in honor to accept it as such, and that its rejection amounted to a breach of faith. General Jackson, however, was utterly opposed to the principle of the bill, had repeatedly avowed his opposition to it, and was resolved, from the day of its introduction, to veto it if it passed. The bill was handed to him for his signature when the last Congress was within twenty-four hours of expiring. Instead of vetoing the measure at the time, he chose to "pocket" it, and the bill was returned to Congress on one of the first days of the present session, to the extreme mortification of Mr. Clay and his friends. The veto message was assailed with peculiar violence, but it was never answered, and is unanswerable. A main objection of the President was, that the bill created new obstacles to the reduction of the price of the public lands. By the operation of the bill, every State would have an immediate interest in keeping up the price, whereas it was

the dictate of true policy to give the utmost possible encouragement to the actual settler, whose labor alone gave value to the land. "I do not doubt," said the President, "that it is the real interest of each and all the States in the Union, and particularly of the new States, that the price of these lands shall be reduced and graduated ; and that, after they have been offered for a certain number of years, the refuse, remaining unsold, shall be abandoned to the States, and the machinery of our land system entirely withdrawn."

Mr. Clay, not content, as it were, with these three blows, afforded the President an opportunity to give him a fourth, by introducing the following resolution :

*"Resolved, That the President of the United States be requested to inform the Senate whether a paper purporting to have been read by him to the heads of the several departments, relating to the deposits of the public money in the treasury of the United States, and alleged to have been published by his authority, be genuine or not ; and if it be genuine, that he be also requested to cause a copy of the said paper to be laid before the Senate."*

The reader will note the use of the word "treasury" in this resolution. It was Mr. Clay's position, in the subsequent debates, that the bank of the United States was the treasury of the United States. The resolution was agreed to by a vote of twenty-three to eighteen. The President, *of course*, refused compliance with both requests. "I have yet to learn," he wrote, "under what constitutional authority that branch of the legislature has a right to require of me an account of any communication, either verbally or in writing, made to the heads of departments acting as a Cabinet council."

A few days after, Mr. Horace Binney, of Philadelphia, presented to the House of Representatives a memorial from the president and directors of the Bank of the United States. This document, in language respectful and dignified, stated that the custody of the public moneys was a part of the original contract between the bank and the government. The bank paid for the privilege in money and service. Recently,

the bank had been deprived of this advantage by an order from the Secretary of the Treasury. The bank had in all respects faithfully and punctually performed its part of the contract. "The board of directors, therefore, deem it their duty forthwith to apprise you of this violation of the chartered rights of the stockholders, and to ask such redress therefor as to your sense of justice may seem proper." The memorial had no results. A resolution ordering the restoration of the deposits to the bank was introduced later in the session, but was lost by the regular party vote. For the first time in many years, there was an anti-bank majority in the House of Representatives, and no considerations of justice or policy can break the spell of party discipline at such times as these.

Early in the session the President sent to the Senate the names of five gentlemen for confirmation as government directors of the Bank of the United States. Of these five, four had rendered themselves obnoxious to the bank and to the bank party by giving the President information of the proceedings of the board of directors, and copies of certain portions of its minutes. Their names were, H. D. Gilpin, John T. Sullivan, Peter Wager, and Hugh M'Eldery. Upon receiving these unwelcome names the Senate acted upon them with an alacrity and promptitude which they were not accustomed to exhibit in deciding upon General Jackson's nominations. Not satisfied with the results of their experiment in rejecting Isaac Hill and Mr. Van Buren, they rejected these names also, after voting down a proposition to inquire into their fitness. The President sent their names a second time to the Senate, accompanied with a message vindicating their conduct, and eulogizing their characters, and remonstrating against the course of the Senate. The nominations were then referred to the Committee on Finance, who reported against them, and the Senate again rejected the odious names. Later in the session the President nominated other gentlemen, who were confirmed. This was worse than a fruitless victory to the friends of the bank, for the impression was

created in the minds of the people that the bank was afraid to subject its proceedings to the relentless scrutiny of honest opponents.

On the 26th of December, two weeks after the refusal of the President to give the Senate a copy of his cabinet paper, Mr. Clay introduced his famous resolutions directly censuring the President for dismissing Mr. Duane and removing the deposits :

*“ Resolved, That by dismissing the late Secretary of the Treasury, because he would not, contrary to his sense of his own duty, remove the money of the United States in deposit with the Bank of the United States and its branches, in conformity with the President’s opinion, and by appointing his successor to effect such removal, which has been done, the President has assumed the exercise of a power over the treasury of the United States not granted to him by the constitution and laws, and dangerous to the liberties of the people.*

*“ Resolved, That the reasons assigned by the Secretary of the Treasury for the removal of the money of the United States, deposited in the Bank of the United States and its branches, communicated to Congress on the third of December, 1833, are unsatisfactory and insufficient.”*

These resolutions, we may as well state at once, were eventually reduced to one, which read as follows :

*“ Resolved, That the President, in the late executive proceedings, in relation to the public revenue, has assumed upon himself authority and power not conferred by the constitution and laws, but in derogation of both.”*

The speech delivered by Mr. Clay, in support of his resolutions, was exasperating to General Jackson in the highest degree. He accused the President of an “open, palpable, and daring usurpation.” After having assumed all the other powers of the government, executive, legislative, and judicial, he had ended by seizing the public purse, as Cæsar had seized the treasury of Rome. “For more than fifteen years,” said Mr. Clay, “I have been struggling to avoid the present state of things. I thought I perceived, in some proceedings, during

the conduct of the Seminole war, a spirit of defiance to the constitution and to all law. With what sincerity and truth—with what earnestness and devotion to civil liberty—I have struggled, the Searcher of all human hearts best knows. With what fortune, the bleeding constitution of my country now fatally attests."

It was after reading this speech that General Jackson exclaimed: "Oh, if I live to get these robes of office off me, I will bring the rascal to a dear account."

Mr. Calhoun, if possible, surpassed Mr. Clay in the vehemence of his denunciations. He said that the plundering of the Roman treasury by Julius Cæsar was a virtuous action, compared with the recent conduct of Andrew Jackson. "*That*," said Mr. Calhoun, "was a case of an intrepid and bold warrior, as an open plunderer, seizing forcibly the treasury of the country, which, in that republic, as well as ours, was confined to the custody of the legislative department of the government. The actors in our case are of a different character—artful, cunning, and corrupt politicians, and not fearless warriors. They have entered the treasury, not sword in hand, as public plunderers, but, with the false keys of sophistry, as pilferers, under the silence of midnight. The motive and the object are the same, varied in like manner by circumstances and character. 'With money I will get men, and with men money,' was the maxim of the Roman plunderer. With money we will get partisans, with partisans votes, and with votes money, is the maxim of our public pilferers."

Mr. Webster opposed the removal of the deposits, and supported Mr. Clay's resolution, in terms less offensive to the President than these, but not less decided and forcible. After a debate of three months' continuance, seldom interrupted, Mr. Clay's resolution of censure was passed in the Senate by a vote of twenty-six to twenty. Another barren victory. Three weeks later, the President sent to the Senate an elaborate Protest against the resolution, and asked that it be entered upon the journal. Another month was consumed in



debating the question whether or not the Senate should comply with the President's request. At length, by a vote of twenty-seven to sixteen, the protest was disposed of by the passage of four resolutions, of which the last two contain the substance :

“ *Resolved*, That the aforesaid protest is a breach of the privileges of the Senate, and that it be not entered on the journal.

“ *Resolved*, That the President of the United States has no right to send a protest to the Senate against any of its proceedings.”

Thus nearly five months of the session were chiefly consumed in an affair which neither had any results nor could be rationally expected to have any. Even the resolution of censure, impotent and harmless as it was, was not suffered to repose in peace upon the record. It had been scarcely entered upon the journal before Colonel Benton gave notice of a resolution to expunge it ; and from that hour, a leading object of his senatorial labors was to procure the passage of his expunging resolution.

The President, meanwhile, was employing his powers and his time far more effectively. The reader may remember, that as long ago as the year 1829, when the war upon the bank began, an attempt was made to deprive the branch of the Bank of the United States at Portsmouth of the pension agency. The bank refused to give up the books, and Mr. Eaton, the Secretary of War, withdrew his demand, and gave up the project. A similar attempt to remove the pension agency from the branch at Albany met with a similar failure. Since that time, the pensions, amounting to about four millions a year, had been paid by the bank and its branches without interference from the government. In January, 1834, a few days after the introduction of Mr. Clay's resolutions of censure, the President attempted to take the whole of this business from the bank. He announced the appointment of fifteen State banks as pension agents, and formally demanded from the Bank of the United States the surrender of the

books and papers relating to pensions, and half a million of dollars remaining in its vaults designed for the next payments. The bank, acting under the best legal advice attainable in the country, refused to surrender either the books or the money.

On the 4th of February, the President, in a special message, communicated this refusal to Congress, accusing the bank of attempting to defeat the measures of the administration, and of assuming functions belonging only to the government. The subject had been referred to the Attorney-General, who had discovered in a supplementary pension act of 1832, a clause which gave the Secretary of War the power to appoint the time and place for the payment of certain pensions. The sum allowed by the act was "to be paid to the officer at such places and days as the secretary may direct." The inference drawn by the Attorney-General from these words is one of the most curious on record. "As the power," said he, "to appoint the *place* of payment is unlimited, the secretary may appoint a place at which there is no bank or other pension agent; in which case the *power to appoint an agent* to pay must, necessarily, exist, or the acknowledged power to appoint a *place* of payment be defeated. In this class of cases, the power to appoint a place of payment, is thus seen to include, as incidental to it, the power of appointing an agent to pay. And if that power be possessed, in any one case, it would seem to be possessed in every other; unless, indeed, it can be held, that the same word, in this law, means one thing in reference to one place, and a totally different thing in reference to another—a construction too refined to be readily adopted."

If this be not a "refined" construction of laws clearly designating the Bank of the United States as the agent for the disbursement of pensions, I know not where an example of refined construction can be found. It was remarked at the time by a friend of the administration, that Mr. Butler had not studied law at Kinderhook for nothing.

The Senate rejected Mr. Butler's reasonings. Three months later in the session, that body passed resolutions to the follow-

ing effect : 1. That the Department of War is not warranted in appointing pension agents in any State or Territory where the Bank of the United States or one of its branches has been established, except when specially authorized by act of Congress. 2. That no power is conferred *by any law* upon the department, or Secretary of War, to remove the agency for the payment of pensions, and the funds, books, and papers, connected with that agency, from the Bank of the United States, and to appoint other agents to supersede the bank in the payment of such pensions." In this interpretation, a minority of the House Committee of Ways and Means concurred. The President held to his purpose, however, and carried his point, and was sustained in it by the people.

M. Chevelier, who witnessed this singular contest, mentions that the enemies of the bank "express the greatest sympathy for the illustrious relics of the revolution, whom the arrogance of the bank, as they say, is about to plunge, at the close of their career, into the most dreadful misery ; they pour forth the most pathetic lamentations over those glorious defenders of the country, whom a *money-corporation* is about to strip of the provision made for their declining years by the nation's gratitude. You may imagine all the noisy arguments and patriotic harangues, that can be delivered on this text. On the 4th of February, the President sent a message to Congress in the same strain. All this is mere declamation, of the most common-place and the most hypocritical kind ; for who will prevent the deliverers of America from duly receiving their pensions, except those who shall refuse them drafts on the bank, which the bank would pay at once ? But a people under fascination is not influenced by reason, and it is at this moment believed by the multitude that the bank has determined to kill the noble veterans of Independence by hunger. Once more, then, anathemas against monopoly, hatred to the moneyed aristocracy ! HURRA FOR JACKSON ! JACKSON FOR EVER !"

As the session wore on, the pressure in the money market increased, the failures became more numerous, the panic

more intense, the clamor more vociferous. The tables of Congress were loaded with petitions for and against the restoration of the deposits. A part of the morning hour for three months was absorbed in receiving these petitions. One of the New York members of the House had the curiosity to save a copy of each of the petitions presented on this subject, and had the whole of them bound into one stupendous volume of nearly two thousand pages. I had prepared, at considerable labor, a catalogue of the contents of this monotonous collection, but even this would occupy more of these pages than can be spared for the purpose. There were in all two hundred and twenty-three petitions, of which fifty-two approved the removal of the deposits, and one hundred and seventy-one asked their restoration to the Bank of the United States. The great cities sent petitions in curious variety. Philadelphia, for example, furnished the following: One from the citizens generally, to which ten thousand names were appended; one from each of the municipal divisions of Philadelphia; one from each of the banks; one from each of the trades; one from "six hundred strangers" in Philadelphia; one from the young men, and one from the women of Philadelphia; one from five thousand Philadelphia democrats; one from the city council; one from the German working men of Philadelphia; one from the Philadelphia Board of Trade; one from the Philadelphia Chamber of Commerce; and one from the Philadelphia Alms-House. New York, Boston, Baltimore, and New Orleans were only less zealous than Philadelphia in forwarding petitions. The great petition from Boston was signed by ten thousand persons; the principal one from New York by six thousand; the most important one from Baltimore by three thousand. The smallest towns contributed their mite to swell the mountain of petitions, and, indeed, the whole country appeared to abandon itself to the work.

The opposition leaders in Congress did not fail to make the most of the prevailing excitement. "The city is full of distress petitioners," wrote Mr. Clay in one of his private

letters; "*the more the better!*" In seconding a motion to print one of the great petitions, Mr. Clay enacted, one morning, a remarkable scene in the Senate chamber. He suddenly ceased to address Mr. Van Buren as the president of the Senate, and broke into an apostrophe to Mr. Van Buren as the friend of Andrew Jackson :

" 'To you, sir,' exclaimed the orator, addressing the Vice-President, 'to you, then, sir, in no unfriendly spirit, but with feelings softened and subdued by the deep distress which pervades every class of our countrymen, I make the appeal. By your official and personal relations with the President you maintain with him an intercourse which I neither enjoy nor covet. Go to him and tell him, without exaggeration, but in the language of truth and sincerity, the actual condition of his bleeding country. Tell him it is nearly ruined and undone by the measures which he has been induced to put in operation. Tell him that his experiment is operating on the nation like the philosopher's experiment upon a convulsed animal in an exhausted receiver, and that it must expire in agony if he does not pause, give it free and sound circulation, and suffer the energies of the people to be revived and restored. Tell him that in a single city more than sixty bankruptcies, involving a loss of upwards of fifteen millions of dollars, have occurred. Tell him of the alarming decline in the value of all property, of the depreciation of all the products of industry, of the stagnation in every branch of business, and of the close of numerous manufacturing establishments, which, a few short months ago, were in active and flourishing operation. Depict to him, if you can find language to portray, the heart-rending wretchedness of thousands of the working classes cast out of employment. Tell him of the tears of helpless widows, no longer able to earn their bread, and of unclad and unfed orphans who have been driven by his policy out of the busy pursuits in which but yesterday they were gaining an honest livelihood. Tell him that in his bosom alone, under actual circumstances, does the power abide to relieve the country; and that unless he opens it to conviction, and corrects the errors of his administration, no human imagination can conceive and no human tongue can express the awful consequences which may follow. Entreat him to pause, and to reflect that there is a point beyond which human endurance can not go; and let him not drive this brave, generous, and patriotic people to madness and despair.' "

Colonel Benton records that, "during the delivery of this apostrophe, the Vice-President maintained the utmost decorum of countenance, looking respectfully, and even innocently,

... the speaker all the while, as if treasuring up every word he said, to be faithfully repeated to the President. After it was over, and the Vice-President had called some Senator to the chair, he went up to Mr. Clay, and asked him for a pinch of his nose-unnix-boy snuff (as he often did), and, having received it, walked away." Mr. Niles tells us, in his *Register*, that at a great meeting, held, soon after, in Philadelphia, it was "resolved" that the Vice-President would deserve the execrations of all good men, if he did not faithfully deliver to the President the message intrusted to him by the Honorable Henry Clay.

The President, during these mad months, was as immovable as the Crag of Bregus, whence he sprang. "I was accustomed," says Colonel Benton, "to see him often during that time, always in the night (for I had no time to quit my bed during the day); and never saw him appear more truly heroic and grand than at this time. He was perfectly mild in his language, cheerful in his temper, firm in his conviction; and confident in his reliance on the power in which he put his trust. I have seen him in a great many situations of peril, and even of desperation, both civil and military, and always saw him firmly relying upon the success of the right through God and the people, and never saw that confidence more firm and steady than now. After giving him an account of the day's proceedings, talking over the state of the contest, and ready to return to sleep a little and prepare much for the combats of the next day, he would usually say: 'We shall whip them yet. The people will take it up after a while.' But he also had good defenders present, and in both Houses, and men who did not confine themselves to the defensive."

Far from it. Colonel Benton informs his readers that he himself spoke thirty times, during the session, on the one topic of debate.

It became the custom, as the excitement increased, for the great petitions to be conveyed to Washington by imposing deputations of distinguished citizens, some of which sought the presence of the President, and laid their griefs

before him. The adventures of one of these deputations, a friendly informant, who witnessed their interview with the President, enables me to relate. The petition of the New York merchants, bearing six thousand signatures (all obtained by the labors and money of Mr. Biddle's devoted adherents), was intrusted to the care of a deputation of great bankers and great merchants, headed by Mr. James G. King. When these worthy gentlemen entered the office of the President, at the White House, they discovered him seated at a table writing, with a long pipe in his mouth, which rested on the table and revealed the intensity of the President's interest in his work, by the volumes of smoke which gushed from its blackened bowl.

"Excuse me a moment, gentlemen," said the President, half rising, and bowing to the group. "Have the goodness to be seated."

In a few minutes he pushed back his paper, rose, and said :

"Now gentlemen, what is your pleasure with me?"

The members of the deputation were introduced to the President by the gentleman whose recollections of the scene I am now recording. Mr. King then began, in his usual deliberate and dignified manner, to state the object of the interview, which was to inform the President of the embarrassments under which the merchants of New York were laboring, and to ask such relief as the Executive alone was supposed to be able to afford. Mr. King had uttered only a few sentences of the address which he had meditated, when the President interrupted him with an irrelevant question.

"Mr. King, you are the son of Rufus King, I believe?"

"I am, sir," was the reply.

Whereupon the President broke into a harangue which astonished the grave and reverend seigniors to whom it was addressed.

"Well, sir," said the President, "Rufus King was always a federalist, and I suppose you take after him. Insolvent do you say? What do you come to me for, then? Go to

Nicholas Biddle. We have no money here, gentlemen. Biddle has all the money. He has millions of specie in his vaults, at this moment, lying idle, and yet you come to *me* to save you from breaking. I tell you, gentlemen, it's all politics."

He continued to speak in a strain like this for fifteen minutes, denouncing Biddle and the bank in the manner usual with him, and gradually working himself up to a high degree of excitement. He laid down his pipe; he gesticulated wildly; he walked up and down the room; and finished by declaring, in respectful but unmistakable language, that his purpose was unchangeable not to restore the deposits. He ceased, at length. The deputation, correctly surmising that their mission was a failure, rose to retire, and were dismissed by the President with the utmost politeness. The gentleman who had introduced the deputation left the apartment with them, but was overtaken by a messenger, as he was descending the stairs, who informed him that the President wished him to return. He accordingly went back to the office, where he found the President exulting over the result of the interview. "Did n't I manage them well?" he exclaimed. The only object of the President in calling him back was to enjoy a chuckle with him over the scene that had transpired.

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" ' Good morning, gentlemen ; pray be seated. '

We introduced each other, and then took seats. The President also sat down by a table and signed several papers, after which he took up a letter, broke the seal, and read it very deliberately ; then another letter ; and was engaged with a third when company was announced. During all this time he did not seem to notice our presence, and, fearing to interrupt important business, we had patiently waited his leisure ; but perceiving, at length, that we must introduce our subject without further delay, or lose the opportunity, we commenced by saying,

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" ' I have been applied to by committee after committee, from New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore, and New York again—one, two, five, seven, and you are the eighth. I have dealt openly and candidly with all. You have seen the committee from your city ; they could tell you my determination. I told them, and I now tell you, I never will restore the deposits ; I never will re-charter the United States Bank, or sign a charter for any bank, so long as my name is Andrew Jackson. '

" His energy and his anger increased as he continued to speak. We replied that we did not come to ask the re-charter of the United States Bank, but merely to declare that our complaints did not originate in faction, and to request from the government the adoption of some system which might tend to restore mercantile confidence.



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" ' Did I advise him to withdraw thirty-five millions from the purchase of inland bills of exchange in the western country ? I tell you I am opposed to all banks and banking operations, from the South Sea bubble to the present time. The Israelites, during the absence of Moses to the Mount, made a golden calf, and fell down and worshiped it, and they sorely suffered for their idolatry. The people of this country may yet be punished for their idolatry. Let the United States Bank relieve the community by issuing their notes, and I pledge myself that the State banks shall not oppress it.' "

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It was officially announced in the *Globe*, soon after the date of the interview with the artizans' delegation, that the President would receive no more deputations sent to Washington to converse with him on questions relating to the currency.

The storm of words raged on, meanwhile, within the walls of the capitol. One member of the House, in a moment of exasperation, drew up a resolution proposing the impeachment of the President ; and on the same piece of paper he wrote some notes for the speech which he designed to deliver on introducing his resolution. One of these notes expressed the opinion that the story of General Jackson's having shed his youthful blood in the revolutionary war was an electioneering story, destitute of truth. The paper, left accidentally on the floor of the House, fell into the hands of the editor of

the *Globe*, who described it to General Jackson. On this occasion the General was betrayed, by his ungovernable wrath, into the use of language that had seldom fallen from his lips since the death of his wife.

“The d——d, infernal scoundrel!” roared the President. “Put your finger here, Mr. Blair,” he added pointing to the long dent in his head left by the sword of the officer whose boots he had refused to clean fifty years before.

Mr. Blair found that the wound had been far more serious than was supposed. He could lay a whole finger in the scar.

In the midst of the angry debates of this session, Congress was frequently called upon to consider events which, at other times, would have allayed undue excitement. Among the deaths announced during the winter and spring of 1834, were those of General Lafayette, William Wirt, John Randolph, and the last of the signers of the declaration of independence, Charles Carroll, of Carrollton. Judge Bouldin, of Virginia, while in the very act of alluding to the death of John Randolph, paused in the midst of a sentence, fell to the floor, in a few moments breathed his last, and was borne from the hall a corpse. The unfinished sentence thus began: “But I can not tell the reasons why his death was not announced without telling what I told a friend that I should say in case I did——” Then the grim messenger laid an icy finger upon his heart and stilled it forever. The House, appalled at the event, hastened to adjourn. A funeral of peculiar solemnity, attended by the President, the Cabinet, and both houses of Congress, gave a brief pause to the war of words. A few weeks after, General Blair, of South Carolina, the only member of the House from that State who was not a nullifier, shot himself dead, in a moment of despair, caused by a relapse into habits of intemperance against which he had vainly struggled for many years.

Although the greater part of the session was worse than wasted in angry speeches, there were not wanting efforts to conciliate the contending factions. Mr. Webster, taking the hint, perhaps, from Mr. Clay’s tariff compromise of the last

Congress, strove to unite the moderate men of all parties in the support of a bill to re-charter the Bank of the United States for six years. Mr. Calhoun, who was an anti-bank man in 1830, but now acted with the Opposition, proposed to re-charter the bank for twelve years. Mr. Clay, however, would listen to nothing less than twenty years. All these propositions, and all similar ones, came to naught, and need not detain us.

On the 4th of April, the House came to a vote upon four resolutions reported by a majority of the Committee of Ways and Means, of which the chairman was Mr. Polk, of Tennessee. 1. Resolved, that the bank ought not to be re-chartered ; yeas, 134, nays, 82. 2. That the deposits ought not to be restored to the bank ; ayes, 118, nays, 103. 3. That the State banks, under new regulations to be ordered by Congress, ought to continue to be the custodians of the public money ; ayes, 117, nays, 105. 4. That a new investigation of the conduct of the bank ought to be made, with a view to ascertain the cause of the commercial embarrassments, and whether the charter of the bank had been violated, and whether there had been in the conduct of the bank any "abuses, corruptions, or malpractices ;" yeas, 175, nays, 42. In accordance with the last resolution, a select committee was appointed, consisting of seven members, Messrs. Francis Thomas, Edward Everett, Henry A. Muhlenberg, John Y. Mason, W. W. Ellsworth, Abijah Mann, and R. T. Lytle. The committee was empowered to visit the parent bank and any of its branches, to examine the books of the bank, and to send for persons and papers.

The bank succeeded in frustrating the designs of the committee. The directors appointed a committee of seven of their number to meet the House Committee and assist them in their investigations. The House Committee, accordingly, or repairing to the apartment in the bank designated for their use, found it preoccupied by the bank committee, one of whom, a member *ex officio*, was Nicholas Biddle. The House Committee objected to this proceeding, and asked the appro-

more intense, the clamor more vociferous. The tables of Congress were loaded with petitions for and against the restoration of the deposits. A part of the morning hour for three months was absorbed in receiving these petitions. One of the New York members of the House had the curiosity to save a copy of each of the petitions presented on this subject, and had the whole of them bound into one stupendous volume of nearly two thousand pages. I had prepared, at considerable labor, a catalogue of the contents of this monotonous collection, but even this would occupy more of these pages than can be spared for the purpose. There were in all two hundred and twenty-three petitions, of which fifty-two approved the removal of the deposits, and one hundred and seventy-one asked their restoration to the Bank of the United States. The great cities sent petitions in curious variety. Philadelphia, for example, furnished the following: One from the citizens generally, to which ten thousand names were appended; one from each of the municipal divisions of Philadelphia; one from each of the banks; one from each of the trades; one from "six hundred strangers" in Philadelphia; one from the young men, and one from the women of Philadelphia; one from five thousand Philadelphia democrats; one from the city council; one from the German working men of Philadelphia; one from the Philadelphia Board of Trade; one from the Philadelphia Chamber of Commerce; and one from the Philadelphia Alms-House. New York, Boston, Baltimore, and New Orleans were only less zealous than Philadelphia in forwarding petitions. The great petition from Boston was signed by ten thousand persons; the principal one from New York by six thousand; the most important one from Baltimore by three thousand. The smallest towns contributed their mite to swell the mountain of petitions, and, indeed, the whole country appeared to abandon itself to the work.

The opposition leaders in Congress did not fail to make the most of the prevailing excitement. "The city is full of distress petitioners," wrote Mr. Clay in one of his private

letters; "*the more the better!*" In seconding a motion to print one of the great petitions, Mr. Clay enacted, one morning, a remarkable scene in the Senate chamber. He suddenly ceased to address Mr. Van Buren as the president of the Senate, and broke into an apostrophe to Mr. Van Buren as the friend of Andrew Jackson :

" 'To you, sir,' exclaimed the orator, addressing the Vice-President, 'to you, then, sir, in no unfriendly spirit, but with feelings softened and subdued by the deep distress which pervades every class of our countrymen, I make the appeal. By your official and personal relations with the President you maintain with him an intercourse which I neither enjoy nor covet. Go to him and tell him, without exaggeration, but in the language of truth and sincerity, the actual condition of his bleeding country. Tell him it is nearly ruined and undone by the measures which he has been induced to put in operation. Tell him that his experiment is operating on the nation like the philosopher's experiment upon a convulsed animal in an exhausted receiver, and that it must expire in agony if he does not pause, give it free and sound circulation, and suffer the energies of the people to be revived and restored. Tell him that in a single city more than sixty bankruptcies, involving a loss of upwards of fifteen millions of dollars, have occurred. Tell him of the alarming decline in the value of all property, of the depreciation of all the products of industry, of the stagnation in every branch of business, and of the close of numerous manufacturing establishments, which, a few short months ago, were in active and flourishing operation. Depict to him, if you can find language to portray, the heart-rending wretchedness of thousands of the working classes cast out of employment. Tell him of the tears of helpless widows, no longer able to earn their bread, and of unclad and unfed orphans who have been driven by his policy out of the busy pursuits in which but yesterday they were gaining an honest livelihood. Tell him that in his bosom alone, under actual circumstances, does the power abide to relieve the country; and that unless he opens it to conviction, and corrects the errors of his administration, no human imagination can conceive and no human tongue can express the awful consequences which may follow. Entreat him to pause, and to reflect that there is a point beyond which human endurance can not go; and let him not drive this brave, generous, and patriotic people to madness and despair.' "

Colonel Benton records that, "during the delivery of this apostrophe, the Vice-President maintained the utmost decorum of countenance, looking respectfully, and even innocently,

at the speaker all the while, as if treasuring up every word he said, to be faithfully repeated to the President. After it was over, and the Vice-President had called some Senator to the chair, he went up to Mr. Clay, and asked him for a pinch of his fine maccoboy snuff (as he often did), and, having received it, walked away." Mr. Niles tells us, in his *Register*, that at a great meeting, held, soon after, in Philadelphia, it was "resolved" that the Vice-President would deserve the execrations of all good men, if he did not faithfully deliver to the President the message intrusted to him by the Honorable Henry Clay.

The President, during these mad months, was as immovable as the Crag of Fergus, whence he sprang. "I was accustomed," says Colonel Benton, "to see him often during that time, always in the night (for I had no time to quit my seat during the day); and never saw him appear more truly heroic and grand than at this time. He was perfectly mild in his language, cheerful in his temper, firm in his conviction; and confident in his reliance on the power in which he put his trust. I have seen him in a great many situations of peril, and even of desperation, both civil and military, and always saw him firmly relying upon the success of the right through God and the people, and never saw that confidence more firm and steady than now. After giving him an account of the day's proceedings, talking over the state of the contest, and ready to return to sleep a little and prepare much for the combats of the next day, he would usually say: 'We shall whip them yet. The people will take it up after a while.' But he also had good defenders present, and in both Houses, and men who did not confine themselves to the defensive."

Far from it. Colonel Benton informs his readers that he himself spoke thirty times, during the session, on the one topic of debate.

It became the custom, as the excitement increased, for the great petitions to be conveyed to Washington by imposing deputations of distinguished citizens, some of which sought the presence of the President, and laid their griefs



before him. The adventures of one of these deputations, a friendly informant, who witnessed their interview with the President, enables me to relate. The petition of the New York merchants, bearing six thousand signatures (all obtained by the labors and money of Mr. Biddle's devoted adherents), was intrusted to the care of a deputation of great bankers and great merchants, headed by Mr. James G. King. When these worthy gentlemen entered the office of the President, at the White House, they discovered him seated at a table writing, with a long pipe in his mouth, which rested on the table and revealed the intensity of the President's interest in his work, by the volumes of smoke which gushed from its blackened bowl.

"Excuse me a moment, gentlemen," said the President, half rising, and bowing to the group. "Have the goodness to be seated."

In a few minutes he pushed back his paper, rose, and said :

"Now gentlemen, what is your pleasure with me?"

The members of the deputation were introduced to the President by the gentleman whose recollections of the scene I am now recording. Mr. King then began, in his usual deliberate and dignified manner, to state the object of the interview, which was to inform the President of the embarrassments under which the merchants of New York were laboring, and to ask such relief as the Executive alone was supposed to be able to afford. Mr. King had uttered only a few sentences of the address which he had meditated, when the President interrupted him with an irrelevant question.

"Mr. King, you are the son of Rufus King, I believe?"

"I am, sir," was the reply.

Whereupon the President broke into a harangue which astonished the grave and reverend seigniors to whom it was addressed.

"Well, sir," said the President, "Rufus King was always a federalist, and I suppose you take after him. Insolvent do you say? What do you come to me for, then? Go to

Nicholas Biddle. We have no money here, gentlemen. Biddle has all the money. He has millions of specie in his vaults, at this moment, lying idle, and yet you come to *me* to save you from breaking. I tell you, gentlemen, it's all politics."

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"He asked, 'How am I to do that?'

"We replied that were not instructed to dictate to the government what to do; but we looked upon the want of a good understanding between the President and the Bank as the great cause of our present embarrassment. At this he became excessively agitated, rose from his seat, and shaking his finger in an earnest and threatening manner, said:

"'In what way have I produced it?'

"To which we replied, 'You informed Congress in your official communications that you did not believe the bank was solvent—that it would not be able, on winding up, to pay all demands against it.'

"The President replied, 'I did so, and I say it now. It will not pay all; it is a corrupt and abominable institution, buying up presses and interfering with elections throughout the country. It has violated its charter repeatedly.'

"We answered that the business portion of the citizens of New York, we believed, viewed it in a different light. But if the bank has violated its charter, the law points out the proper course to be pursued. Here his excitement assumed an extraordinary shape, his whole frame trembling with agitation.

"'Well,' said he, 'have I not pursued lawful measures?'

"We answered that the charter authorized the President to issue a *scire facias*, but we believed that course had not been pursued. He answered, in a vehement manner:

"'It may be, however, before the affairs of the bank are wound up.'

"He became too angry now to hope for any good growing out of further conversation. One of our committee, with a hope of appeasing his extreme irritation, said to him, in the kindest manner:

"'May it please the President, we have been particularly instructed by those whom we represent, not only to present our memorial to both houses of Congress, but to state personally to the Executive our grievances, and ask the wisdom of the government to devise some method for our relief.'

"But the President continued, 'Why am I teased with committees? Here I am receiving two or three anonymous letters every day, threatening me with assassination if I don't restore the deposits and re-charter the bank—the abominable institution—the monster, that has grown up out of circumstances, and has attempted to control the government. I've got my foot upon it, and I'll crush it.' (The *Globe* lay before him on the table, containing some of the letters referred to.) He continued, 'Am I to violate my constitutional oath? Is it to be expected that I am to be turned from my purpose? Is Andrew Jackson to bow the knee to the golden calf, as did the Israelites of old? I tell you, if you want relief, go to Nicholas Biddle.'

"We replied, 'Nicholas Biddle will tell us that he is but following the

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privation of a room in the bank to their exclusive use. The directors refused compliance with this request, and intimated to the committee that the use of a room in the bank, on any terms, was regarded by the directors as a favor to the committee. In fact the directors positively reminded the committee that beggars must not be choosers. When, therefore, the House Committee presented themselves at the bank a second time, they found Mr. Biddle and his committee already in possession of the apartment, and disposed to treat the House Committee as distinguished guests.

The House Committee returned to their hotel, and resolved to conduct their investigation there. They notified the president and directors of the bank of their intention, and appointed a day and hour for the attendance of the president and directors, who were asked to submit certain books and papers of the bank to the inspection of the committee. The directors replied that they did not feel justified in submitting their books and papers to the secret, *ex parte* inspection of a hostile body. The committee then notified the directors that they would again repair to the bank and examine the books there, either at the counter or in an apartment. At the appointed hour, the committee entered the bank and demanded to see the books. The directors again refused to comply with the demand, and stated their reasons in writing. The committee, in writing, demanded the surrender of certain specified books, for the specified purpose of ascertaining whether the bank had employed its power in producing distress or in controlling elections. The directors replied, in writing, by pointing out the mode in which they thought the inquiry ought to be conducted ; and by explaining the conditions upon which alone any books would be submitted to inspection. They required the committee "when they asked for books and papers, to state specifically in writing, the purposes for which they are proposed to be inspected ; and if it be to establish a violation of the charter, then to state specifically in writing, what are the alleged or supposed violations of charter, to which the evidence is alleged to be applicable."



The committee refusing to do this, no books were shown them, and they returned to their hotel. Their next step was to demand copies of certain books, entries, and papers designated by them. The directors replied that it would require the labor of two clerks for ten months to execute the copies demanded. As a last resort, the baffled committee caused the marshal of the district to serve subpoenas upon the president and directors, with a clause (*duces tecum*) commanding them to bring with them the books required. The directors obeyed the summons so far as to attend the committee at their apartment, but disobeyed the clause of the subpoena requiring them to produce the books. Upon entering the committee room the president of the bank handed to the chairman of the committee a document, signed by himself and every member of the board. In this paper the directors stated that "they do not produce the books required, because they are not in the custody of either of us, but, as has been heretofore stated, of the board; and considering that as corporators and directors we are parties to the proceeding, we do not consider ourselves bound to testify, and, therefore, respectfully decline to do so."

The attempt to investigate having completely failed, the committee returned to Washington, reported their proceedings to the House, and concluded by moving "that the speaker of this House do issue his warrant to the sergeant-at-arms to arrest Nicholas Biddle, president, Manuel Eyre, Lawrence Lewis, Ambrose White, Daniel W. Cox, John Holmes, Chas. Chauncey, John Goddard, John R. Neff, William Platt, Matthew Newkirk, James C. Fisher, John S. Henry, and John Sergeant, directors of the Bank of the United States, and bring them to the bar of this House, to answer for the contempt of its lawful authority."

The minority of the committee, Messrs. Everett and Ellsworth, submitted a report to the House, which justified the directors in every particular. "Firmly believing," said they, "that the directors are innocent of the crimes and corruptions with which they have been charged, and that, if guilty,

they ought not to be compelled to criminate themselves, we are clearly of the opinion that the directors of the bank have been guilty of no contempt of the authority of the House, in having respectfully declined to submit their books for inspection, except as required by charter." The motion of the majority was never acted upon by the House, and so the bank added one more to its long series of fruitless triumphs.

The last few days of the session were signalized by events that amounted almost to a second disruption of the cabinet. The reader is aware that Mr. McLane, the Secretary of State, had opposed the recent currency measures of the President, from their inception to their consummation. He had, for a whole year, desired to resign, and on more than one occasion had resolved to do so, and, I believe, had once actually penned a letter of resignation. He was dissuaded from resigning by the politicians surrounding the President, who remembered well the disruption of 1831, and shuddered at the possible effects of a second on the fortunes of the party. Mr. McLane, however, as we have before hinted, indulged presidential aspirations. He believed that the people would not sustain the late measures, and deemed it unjust that he should share the odium of acts which he had done his utmost to prevent. He wavered long between contending attachments and desires ; but a few days before the adjournment of Congress, he resigned his place, and retired to private life, the *Globe* declaring that though the Secretary and the President had differed in opinion, they parted friends. Mr. John Forsyth, of Georgia, the particular friend and defender of Mr. Van Buren, was appointed to the vacant place.

The new Secretary of the Treasury, Mr. Taney, had not yet been confirmed by the Senate. The President, knowing well what would happen when the nomination should be submitted to the action of a hostile Senate, held back his name until the last week of the session. June 23d, the nomination was sent in, and instantly rejected by a vote of thirty to fifteen.

The nomination of Mr. Butler to the attorney-general-

ship was confirmed. Mr. Woodbury was soon gratified by the promotion he had longed for, in being appointed to the place from which Mr. Taney was compelled to retire. The Navy Department was assigned to Mr. Mahlon Dickerson, once governor of New Jersey, and for sixteen years a representative of that State in the Senate of the United States.

The Senate had yet another blow to give the President before parting. The mission to England was vacant still. The President, who had long ago fixed upon a gentleman to fill that coveted post, and had, indeed, promised it to him, sent his name to the Senate near the close of the session. It was Andrew Stephenson, for many years the speaker of the House, a man most hateful to the opposition from his strict partisanship in the appointment of committees. The Senate rejected the nomination. The President adhered to his purpose, however, till a Senate was found willing to confirm the nomination.

As a part of the history of the removal of the deposits, we may add an incident or two of the subsequent career of Mr. Taney. In 1835, a vacancy occurred on the bench of the Supreme Court by the resignation of one of the associate Justices. A place upon that bench had been the dream of Mr. Taney's life, from youth to middle age. General Jackson sent his name to the Senate for confirmation to the vacant seat. The Senate, of which a majority was still hostile to the administration, did not so much as deign to notice the nomination. Before Congress again assembled, the death of Chief Justice Marshall left vacant the highest judicial place in the President's gift. The long service of Justice Story, his great ability, worth, and reputation, his early championship of the republican party in New England, the known wish of the late Chief Justice, all combined to designate him as the rightful successor to the vacant seat. The President nominated Mr. Taney, and the Senate, wherein then the administration commanded a majority, confirmed the nomination.

On the last day of June, after a session of seven wasted

months, Congress adjourned, leaving the President as completely master of the situation as he was before it convened.

As the commercial embarrassments diminished, the clamor against the administration died away, and the fall elections demonstrated that the party in power had been shaken, but not seriously weakened. There were opposition gains here and there, but the empire State this year elected Marcy governor over Seward by a majority that surprised the democrats, and utterly disheartened the whigs. A stranger would have thought the administration lost beyond redemption in April. In November, it was found that Hurrah for Jackson was still an argument against which nothing could prevail. In April, the grand jury of Rowan county, North Carolina, the county in which Andrew Jackson had studied law, "*presented*" the removal of the deposits as an act of usurpation, and the administration that had done the deed as profligate, proscriptive, and tyrannical. In April, the leaders of the opposition could not stir abroad without incurring the risk of an ovation, and Mr. Biddle's casual presence in Wall street was the sensation of the day. In November, the excitement was a thing of the past, and almost effaced from recollection by a new topic.

Upon a calm review of the consequences of transferring the public money to the State banks, no person, who is both candid and disinterested, can hesitate to admit, I think, that the act was as unwise as it was precipitate and unnecessary. The State banks, as a senator remarked, "soon began to feel their oats." The expression is homely, but not inapt. The extraordinary increase in the public revenue during the next two years, added immense sums to the available capital of those banks, and gave a new and undue importance to the business of banking. Banks sprang into existence like mushrooms in a night. The pet banks seemed compelled to extend their business, or lose the advantage of their connection with the government. The great bank felt itself obliged to expand or be submerged in the general inflation. It expanded twelve millions during the next two years. All the other

banks expanded, and all men expanded, and all things expanded. It was the period of expansion. Many causes, as we all know, conspired to produce the unexampled, the disastrous, the demoralizing inflation of 1835 and 1836 ; but I do not see any escape from the conclusion, that the *inciting* cause was the vast amounts of public treasure that, during those years, were “lying about loose” in the deposit banks. General Jackson desired a currency of gold and silver. Never were such floods of paper money emitted as during the continuance of his own fiscal system. He wished to reduce the number and the importance of banks, bankers, brokers, and speculators. The years succeeding the transfer of the deposits were the golden biennium of just those classes. In a word, his system, as far as my small acquaintance with such matters enables me to judge, worked ill at every moment of its operation, and upon every interest of business and morality. To it, more than to all other causes combined, we seem to owe the inflation of 1835 and 1836, the universal ruin of 1837, the dreary and hopeless depression of the five years following.

During the summer of 1834, General Jackson paid his accustomed visit to the Hermitage, and partook of the usual banquet at Nashville, and made the usual detour on his return. In the towns through which he passed, he was greeted with, if possible, more than the old enthusiasm.

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## CHAPTER XL.

### THE FRENCH IMBROGLIO.

THE particular complaisance of General Jackson’s administration toward Great Britain has already excited our surprise. Still less could it have been foreseen, that the only country with which it was to be dangerously embroiled was the old ally of the democratic party, the favorite land of Jefferson and Jeffersonians—France.

In May, 1806, the British government issued an Order in

Council, which declared the northern coast of Europe, from Denmark to the Bay of Biscay, all of which was then under the sway of Napoleon, to be in a state of blockade.

Napoleon retorted, in November following, by the Berlin Decree, which was in these words : " The British Isles are in a state of blockade. All trade and communication with Great Britain are strictly prohibited. All letters going to or coming from England or addressed to English persons, are not to be forwarded : and all those written in English are to be suppressed. Every individual who is a subject of Great Britain is to be made prisoner of war wherever he may be found. All goods belonging to Englishmen are to be confiscated, and the amount paid to those who have suffered through the detention of ships by the English. No ships coming from Great Britain, or having been in a port of that country, are to be admitted. All trade in English goods is rigorously prohibited."

In January, 1807, the British government was provoked by the Berlin decree to issue another Order in Council, of which the following was the most important article : " No vessel shall be permitted to trade from one port to another, both which ports shall belong to or be in possession of France or her allies, or shall be so far under their control as that British vessels may not freely trade thereat ; and the commanders of his Majesty's ships of war and privateers shall be, and are hereby instructed to warn every neutral vessel coming from any such port, and destined to another such port, to discontinue her voyage, and not to proceed to any such port ; and any vessel, after being so warned, or any vessel coming from any such port, after a reasonable time shall have been afforded for receiving information of his Majesty's order, which shall be found proceeding to another such port, shall be captured and brought in, and, together with her cargo, shall be condemned as lawful prize."

This order, not having been found adequate to its purpose, was followed, in November of the same year, by another, which declared " that all the ports and places of France and

her allies, or of any other country at war with his Majesty, and all other ports and places in Europe from which, although not at war with his Majesty, the British flag is excluded, and all ports or places in the colonies, belonging to his Majesty's enemies, shall from henceforth be subject to the same restrictions, in point of trade and navigation, with the exceptions hereinafter mentioned, as if the same were actually blockaded by his Majesty's naval forces in the most strict and rigorous manner."

Napoleon had no sooner read this order than he responded to it by issuing the famous Milan decree, which ordered that every ship, to whatever nation it may belong, which shall have submitted to be searched by an English ship, or which shall be on her voyage to England, or which shall have paid any tax whatever to the English government, shall be declared to be "denationalized." The second article of the decree notified the maritime world that "whether the ship denationalized by the arbitrary measures of the English government enter our ports or those of our allies, or whether they fall into the hands of our ships of war or privateers, they are declared to be good and lawful prizes."

Both under the British orders-in-council and under the Napoleonic decrees, spoliations upon the commerce of the United States were committed. It will devolve upon that hapless man, the Future Historian, to whom so many puzzling questions are daily referred, to explain why the spoliations committed under the orders-in-council caused a war between the United States and Great Britain, and why those perpetrated under the decrees of Napoleon did not provoke a war between the United States and France. It concerns us only to know that, while the war of 1812 was supposed to have righted the wrongs committed by Britain, the French spoliations remained unatoned until the second term of General Jackson's presidency.

Those spoliations were of a character singularly atrocious. In many well-authenticated cases, ships were confiscated only on the ground that they had been boarded by the officers of

a British man-of-war. Other ships were confiscated because they had been *forced* by an armed vessel to enter an English port. In some cases, American citizens were detained in France, under the *surveillance* of the police, for months, because they were suspected of the crime, least pardonable by Napoleon, of being English.

From the time of the general peace, in 1815, until General Jackson's accession to power, the American government had sought compensation for these outrages in vain. The French government was brought to admit the justice of the claim, but disputed its amount, and exhibited that distaste for the discussion of the subject which men and governments generally manifest when the object sought of them is the payment of a stale debt. The first message of President Jackson announced his intention to press the affair to a settlement. "The claims of our citizens," said the President, "for depredations upon their property long since committed, under the authority, and, in many instances, by the express direction of the then existing government of France, remain unsatisfied, and must, therefore, continue to furnish a subject of unpleasant discussion, and possible collision, between the two governments. I cherish, however, a lively hope, founded as well on the validity of those claims, and the established policy of all enlightened governments, as on the known integrity of the French monarch, that the injurious delays of the past will find redress in the equity of the future. Our Minister has been instructed to press these demands on the French government with all the earnestness which is called for by their importance and irrefutable justice, and in a spirit that will evince the respect which is due to the feelings of those from whom the satisfaction is required."

It pleased the sapient counselors of Charles X., glad of any pretext to postpone a disagreeable subject, to pretend to regard the words "possible collision" in the light of a "menace." The American Ambassador, Mr. Rives, of Virginia, contrived to mollify their feelings, and the negotiation languidly proceeded, till the revolution of 1830 drove Charles



X. from his throne and country, and made Louis Philippe king of the French.

Louis Philippe was the cordial friend of the United States and an admirer of General Jackson. He remembered his early wanderings in the American wilderness with a delight that was enhanced by his imprisonment in the forms of a court. There was nothing about which he oftener conversed, or conversed more interestingly, than his youthful adventures among the wild woods and the wild men of the west. Under him, the negotiation for indemnity made such progress, that, on the 4th of July, 1831, a treaty was concluded in Paris, and signed by Mr. Rives, which bound the French government to pay to the United States the sum of five millions of dollars, in six annual instalments ; the first to be paid one year from the date of the ratification of the treaty. The treaty was ratified at Washington on the 2d of February, 1832. The first instalment, therefore, was due in Paris on the 2d of February, 1833.

The affair was then supposed to be settled. So little did Congress expect any further difficulty or delay, that it immediately, and as a matter of course, passed a law providing for the appointment of three commissioners to make an equitable division of the money among the various claimants. The commissioners were to meet in June, 1833, and were to continue the labor of distribution, if necessary, for three years, at salaries of three thousand dollars a year. The treaty of indemnity bound the United States to make certain reductions of the duties upon French wines, and a law in accordance with this stipulation was promptly passed by Congress. Nothing remained but for France to pay the money.

The government of France changes so frequently, that it may be necessary to remind the reader, that the government over which Louis Philippe presided was a limited, or constitutional monarchy, resembling that of Great Britain. There was a Chamber of Peers and a Chamber of Deputies ; the former an ornamental nonentity ; the latter, the governing power of the country. In the Chamber of Deputies sat the

leading members of the cabinet, who held their places only so long as they could command a majority therein. The king had no more control over the public purse than the Sovereign of England or the President of the United States. All the expenditures of the government required an appropriation by the Chamber of Deputies, the immediate representatives of the people, who exhibited the reluctance to vote money which such bodies invariably do, when they are composed of two parties, one in power, the other ambitious of power. Mr. Rives and the king, when they signed the treaty of 1831, were aware that the real difficulty had yet to be encountered. Mr. Rives, however, in the flush of his diplomatic triumph, could not be expected to enlarge upon this branch of the subject in his communications to his government. He had done his duty ; let the chambers do theirs. He came home in triumph, and said nothing calculated to disturb the impression that the instalments would be paid, as a matter of course, as soon as they were due.

The 2d of February, 1833, the day on which the first instalment was due at Paris, arrived. The administration deigned to employ the services of the United States Bank on this occasion, although even then the removal of the deposits was in agitation at the White House. On the 7th of February, a draft upon the French Minister of Finance, drawn in favor of the cashier of the Bank of the United States, was signed by the Secretary of the Treasury. The American Chargé des Affaires notified the French Government, in due form, that such a draft was on its way. This draft was *purchased* by the Bank of the United States, and its proceeds were immediately placed to the credit of the government. The bank sold the draft to parties in England, who, on the 23d of March, presented it to the French Minister of Finance for payment. The Minister informed the bearer of the draft, that no money had been appropriated by the deputies for the American indemnity, and it could not be paid. The financial complication resulting from the non-payment of the draft, involving the English holders, the Bank of the United States

and the American government, can be readily imagined. I spare the reader the recital of the President's new quarrel with the bank which arose when Mr. Biddle attempted to adjust the matter with the Secretary of the Treasury. I will merely say, that the dishonoring of a bill in Paris drawn by the Secretary of the Treasury of the United States, was an event not calculated to lessen the disgust felt by General Jackson at the neglect of the French government to provide for the fulfillment of the treaty.

It is not difficult to account for that neglect. The treaty of 1831, which was such a feather in the cap of Mr. Rives, which was so complacently announced in the President's message, and so highly extolled in the party newspapers, was not regarded in France as an affair of the first importance. The king was occupied in securing his always shaky throne ; the ministry in battling with an active and able opposition ; the Chambers in the questions of the hour and the strife for place. The news of the ratification of the treaty reached Paris in April, 1832, five days before the expiration of the session of the Chambers ; and neither king, ministry, nor deputies thought of providing money to meet an instalment due in February, 1833. In November, the Chambers were again in session, and sat until April, 1833. But as there was no American minister in Paris to press the claim of the United States, the bill to provide for the first instalment was not introduced till near the close of the session ; was not then made a ministerial measure ; was not supported by the ministry either with unanimity or with vigor ; and was not acted upon by the Chamber of Deputies.

It was a fault in the administration of General Jackson to leave the French mission vacant at such a time ; but upon receiving the news that the draft of February, 1833, had been dishonored, the administration hastened to atone for its error in a striking manner. Mr. Edward Livingston, the Secretary of State, resigned his office, accepted the appointment of minister to France, and was despatched to his post in a national vessel. He was accompanied by his son-in-law,

Mr. Thomas P. Barton, who was appointed Secretary of Legation. In October, 1833, Mr. Livingston presented his credentials to the king, who received him with particular cordiality. "The king's answer to my address," wrote Mr. Livingston, "was long and earnest. I can not pretend to give you the words of it, but, in substance, it was a warm expression of his good feeling toward the United States, for the hospitality he had received there. As to the convention, he said, 'assure your government that unavoidable circumstances alone prevented its immediate execution, but it will be faithfully performed. Assure your government of this,' he repeated; 'the necessary laws will be passed at the next meeting of the Chambers. I tell you this not only as king, but as an individual whose promise will be fulfilled.'"

The king was mistaken, and Mr. Livingston was disappointed. At the next session of the Chambers, the bill appropriating the money due to the United States was lost by a majority of five—the Minister of Finance himself voting against it!\* The ministry in general not only would not stake their places upon carrying the measure, but gave it a languid support that invited and justified opposition.

The king, there is every reason to believe, was sincerely desirous to pay the money. He expressed to Mr. Livingston great regret at the failure of the appropriation. He did more than that. In confidential conversations with the American minister he intimated clearly enough his opinion that the only way left to induce the Chamber to vote the money was for the President of the United States to insert a passage in his next message which should show that the American government was in earnest in the matter, and was resolved to insist upon the prompt payment of the indemnity. Mr. Livingston communicated these conversations to his government, and, accordingly, the message of 1834 con-

\* It is due to the reader to state that some of the facts recorded in this chapter, not to be found in the public documents, I received from surviving members of Mr. Livingston's family. To Mr. Thomas P. Barton, of this city, the reader is under particular obligations for interesting information communicated to me in the most obliging and agreeable manner.

tained a strong passage respecting the unpaid indemnity. This message was prepared with unusual care, and was written with great ability. It gave a history, full and exact, of the late proceedings of the French legislature; and concluded the discussion of the subject with five short and quiet paragraphs, which electrified two continents.

The President said it was a principle of international law, that when one nation refused to pay a just debt, the aggrieved nation might "*seize on the property*" belonging to the citizens of the defaulting nation. If, therefore, France did not pay the money at the next session of the chambers, the United States ought to delay no longer to take by force what it could not get by negotiation. Nay, more. "Since France," said the President, "in violation of the pledges given through her minister here, has delayed her final action so long that her decision will not probably be known in time to be communicated to this Congress, I recommend that a law be passed *authorizing reprisals upon French property*, in case provisions shall not be made for the payment of the debt at the approaching session of the French Chambers. Such a measure ought not to be considered by France as a menace. Her pride and power are too well known to expect any thing from her fears, and preclude the necessity of the declaration that nothing partaking of the character of intimidation is intended by us. She ought to look upon it as the evidence only of an inflexible determination on the part of the United States to insist on their rights."

Such words as these, I need scarcely say, were not such as the King of the French expected to read in the message. His idea of "strong language" and a "high tone" differed from that of General Jackson. When he suggested to Mr. Livingston to advise the President to employ strong language in speaking of the indemnity, he used those words in a European and diplomatic sense. Nothing could be further from his thoughts than such terms as "reprisals," "seizures," "sequestration," and "taking redress into our own hands." Members of General Jackson's own cabinet deemed the paragraphs quoted above needlessly irritating and menacing, but the General would not consent to abate a word of them.

“No, gentlemen,” he exclaimed, one day, during a Kitchen Cabinet discussion of the message, “I know them French. They won’t pay unless they ’re made to.”

The French King, alive to all the importance of the subject, was so anxious to obtain the message at the earliest moment, that he sent a courier to Havre to await the arrival of the packet, and convey the document to Paris. Louis Philippe, therefore, received the message before it reached the American Ambassador, and was the first man in Paris who read it. I am enabled to state, that the king read the message with much surprise, but more amusement. He thought it a capital joke. He was amused at the interpretation put upon the advice he had given Mr. Livingston. The language of the message, which a Tennessean deemed eminently moderate and dignified, sounded in the cabinet of the Tuilleries, like a fiery declaration of war. Upon the whole, however, the king was pleased and satisfied with the message, because he thought it calculated to produce the effect upon the deputies which he desired it should produce.

The next day, the editors of Paris received their files of American newspapers. The press of France under Louis Philippe was not the tool of despotism which it must be under any man of Bonapartean lineage. With one voice, the Parisian newspapers, ministerial, opposition, and neutral, denounced the message as an insult to France, so gross, that it would be infamy not to resent it. A clamor arose, the violence of which can not be overstated. The excitement was increased when, shortly after, American newspapers arrived containing the extracts from Mr. Livingston’s confidential correspondence which are alluded to above. Imagine the embarrassment of the king, the disgust of the American Minister, the exultation of the opposition, the indignation of the people, the comments of the press, upon the publication of despatches which showed the King of the French attempting to gain influence in the Chamber of Deputies by inciting the President of the United States to act upon its fears!

The French government, weak because the King was

weak, cowardly because the King was not brave, felt itself compelled to bow to the storm. The French minister resident in Washington was immediately recalled, and Mr. Livingston was informed that passports were at his disposal. The chambers were notified that diplomatic intercourse between France and the United States had been suspended. A bill was introduced in the chamber by the Minister of Finance proposing to pay the money, provided the Congress of the United States should pass no hostile act in accordance with the President's hostile message. The minister explained to the chamber that the message was nothing more than the expression of the President's individual opinion, and was not to be considered the act of the people until its recommendations had been adopted by their representatives in Congress.

Mr. Livingston, instead of asking for the passports which had been offered him, determined to await the arrival, hourly expected, of the orders of his own government. He wrote, meanwhile, an eloquent and ingenious paper, addressed to the ministry, designed to show that the French people had interpreted the message erroneously ; that it was a document written to heal, not widen the breach ; that it expressed a sincere and profound desire to avoid hostile measures ; that no man knew better than the President how unworthy and how hopeless were the attempt to extort from the fears of a brave and high-spirited nation what could not be obtained from its justice. All this the King understood, and so did a majority of his Cabinet. The difficulty, then, was to allay the excitement of the people and silence the thunders of the press.

Mr. Livingston received his dispatches from Washington—dispatches written before General Jackson had heard of the recall of the French minister from the United States. The President ordered Mr. Livingston, in case the money was not appropriated by the Deputies at the winter session of 1835, to demand his passports and leave the country.

The action of Congress upon the message was well calculated to soothe the pride of the French people, and ought,

at once, to have terminated the difficulty. On the 14th of January, the Senate, *without one dissentient voice*, passed the following resolution :

“ *Resolved*, That it is inexpedient, at present, to adopt any legislative measures in regard to the state of affairs between the United States and France.”

On no other occasion during the turbulent administration of General Jackson, was the vote of the Senate, upon an important question, unanimous. Resolutions of a similar character were presented in the House of Representatives. On technical grounds, only, the House objected to suspend the rules for their reception. The pacific action of Congress had its effect upon the Chamber of Deputies. In May, by a vote of 289 to 137, the chamber passed a bill appropriating a sum sufficient to pay the three instalments due upon the indemnity. Unfortunately, a condition was annexed to the payment of the money which the American government felt to be utterly inadmissible. The bill forbade the ministry to pay the instalments until the President had apologized for the language of the message of 1834 ! The exact apology demanded was stated by the Minister for Foreign Affairs : “ We will pay the money,” said he, “ when the government of the United States is ready, on its part, to declare to us, by addressing its claim to us officially, in writing, that it regrets the misunderstanding which has arisen between the two countries ; that this misunderstanding is founded on a mistake ; that it never entered into its intention to call in question the good faith of the French government, nor to take a menacing attitude toward France.” “ If the government of the United States,” he added elsewhere, “ does not give this assurance, we shall be obliged to think that this misunderstanding is not the result of an error.” Again : “ The government of the United States knows that upon itself depends henceforth the execution of the treaty of July 4th, 1831.”

Mr. Livingston, after the passage of this bill, asked for his passports, embarked on board the frigate *Constitution*, and



returned to the United States, leaving behind him, as *Chargé des Affaires*, his son-in-law, Mr. Barton. I should add that before leaving Paris, he officially informed the French government that the President had approved the pacific interpretation of the message of 1834 which Mr. Livingston had given to it, on his own responsibility, soon after its arrival in France. This he considered, and General Jackson considered, was more than equivalent to the apology which the Chamber of Deputies demanded.

Congress had adjourned when Mr. Livingston reached the United States. A clause of an appropriation bill, giving the President the command of three millions of dollars, in case any thing should occur during the intermission to render an extraordinary expenditure necessary, had been fortunately lost at the last moment of the session. The President was, therefore, still obliged to rely upon the efficacy of words. Orders were immediately sent out to Mr. Barton to convey to the Minister of Finance a formal demand for the payment of the three instalments overdue. The *Chargé* presented the demand accordingly. The minister replied that he was not authorized to pay the money until the "formalities" enjoined by the Chamber of Deputies had been complied with on the part of the government of the United States. Mr. Barton communicated this refusal to his government. The President then directed the *Chargé* to demand of the French government its "final determination," and, if the instalments were not paid, to close the office of the Legation, deposit its contents with the Consul, and return to the United States.

Before the result of this last application was known to the President, Congress met, and the message had to be presented. The President recounted the history of the affair, informed Congress of the last orders sent to the *Chargé*, and promised another communication as soon as Mr. Barton, or a despatch from that gentleman, should arrive. Congress and the country were kept in painful suspense for six weeks awaiting the news that might forebode inevitable war.

A caricature published during this period expressed the popular feeling. General Jackson and Louis Philippe figure as pugilists in a ring. General Jackson has just dealt the king a blow on the nose, that has caused his crown to topple forward, and his portly person to reel and stagger. The President says: "General Valaré wants an apology, does he? By the Eternal! he shall have a taste of Old Virginia rip-raps, in the shape of a tough hickory whip, that will make him belch compliance, as old Bainbridge, Hull, and Decatur made your crusty neighbor, Johnny Bull!" Behind the king are frogs in uniform, one of whom says: "Vive le roi! vive la bagatelle! L'Américain generale c'est bete! Vive Valaré! General Shackson, God dame!" Behind General Jackson rises Neptune, who slaps the General upon the back, and encourages him with such elegant expressions as these: "Fowl him, Andy! Give it to him, my boy! Old Ironsides, or even the Pennsylvania, will do to make Johnny Crapeau's stomach qualmish!"

Mr. Barton received the final determination of the French government, which was, not to pay the indemnity until the President had apologized. He set sail on his return home in December, 1835, and reached New York, after a long voyage, in January, 1836. Hindrances unavoidable and exasperating delayed his arrival in Washington for two or three days, during which the impatience of the President rose to fever heat. He reached Washington at last, and went to the residence of Mr. Livingston, who accompanied him to the mansion of the President. On the way thither they were joined by Mr. Van Buren and Mr. Forsyth, both of whom were embarrassed and anxious beyond their power to conceal.

"Well, sir," asked the Secretary of State, "what are you going to tell the President?"

"I am going to tell him the whole truth, as I understand it," replied Mr. Barton.

The Chargé perceived a certain constraint and agitation in the group. He stopped near the steps of the White House, and asked,

“Gentlemen, do you want oil poured upon the flames, or water?”

“Oh, WATER, by all means!” exclaimed the company in chorus.

“That,” said Mr. Barton, “will be the effect of the little that I have to say.”

They entered the presidential sanctum and were soon joined by its irascible master.

“So, sir,” said the General to Mr. Barton, “you have got here at last, have you!”

This seemed to the gentleman addressed an ominous beginning to an interview, a possible result of which was war with a powerful nation. He hastened to explain the causes of his detention—the negligence of a pilot and an extraordinary fall of snow. The President was mollified, and darted forthwith to the heart of the matter.

“Tell me, sir, do the French mean to pay that money?”

“General Jackson,” was the reply, “I am sorry to inform you that they do not?”

The President rose from his chair, and, turning to the group of anxious officials, exclaimed,

“*There*, gentlemen! What have I told you, all along?”

He strode up and down the room several times in a state of extreme excitement. It was too evident to the gentlemen present that Mr. Barton’s communication had not produced upon the President’s mind the effect of water upon fire.

“What do they say about it, sir?” suddenly demanded the President. “What excuse do they give?”

“General,” said Mr. Barton, “I am exceedingly desirous to make you acquainted with the state of affairs in France, as far as I myself understand it; but to do this effectually I must beg to be allowed to tell my story in my own way.”

“Right, sir,” said the President, seizing a chair and sitting down in it with emphasis. “Go on, sir.”

“I verily believe, General,” began Mr. Barton, “that down to a recent period, the French government was trifling with us.”

Up sprang the President again, at these words.

“Do you hear that, gentlemen? *Trifling with us!* My very words. I have always said so.”

The President resumed his seat, and Mr. Barton his explanation.

“I mean by trifling with us, that they thought the treaty a matter of no great importance, and one which was not pressing, and would not be pressed by the United States. It could be attended to this year, or next year—it was of small consequence which.”

The ex-Chargé proceeded to say, that the popular opposition to the payment of the indemnity had risen to such a height in France, that any ministry that should pay it before the President had apologized would, not only lose their places, but subject themselves to impeachment. There was no man in France who would dare to encounter the odium of attempting it. The king would endanger his throne if he should give it his sanction. France was in a kind of frenzy on the subject, and no considerations addressed to its reason or its prudence had the slightest weight. The king, the ministry, the capitalists, and all reflecting persons sincerely desired to avoid a collision with the United States, from which France could gain nothing that she desired to gain. But the people were mad; and no one could predict how far the government might be compelled to yield to their fury.

This was the substance of Mr. Barton’s communication to the President, and it had the effect desired of allaying the irritation of his mind. The President dismissed him with every mark of approval and friendship.

The message to Congress which announced Mr. Barton’s return, and communicated the intelligence which he brought, was meant to be as pacific and conciliatory as the circumstances were supposed to permit. But it contained passages of fearful import to the lovers of peace. “The return of our Chargé des Affaires,” said the President, “is attended with public notices of naval preparations on the part of France destined for our seas. Of the cause and intent of these

armaments I have no authentic information, nor any other means of judging, except such as are common to yourselves and to the public ; but whatever may be their object, we are not at liberty to regard them as unconnected with the measures which hostile movements on the part of France may compel us to pursue. They at least deserve to be met by adequate preparation on our part, and I therefore strongly urge large and speedy preparations for the increase of the navy, and the completion of our coast defenses. If this array of military force be really designed to affect the action of the government and people of the United States on the questions now pending between the two nations, then indeed would it be dishonorable to pause a moment on the alternative which such a state of affairs should present to us. Come what may, the explanation which France demands can never be accorded ; and no armament, however powerful and imposing, at a distance or on our coast, will, I trust, deter us from discharging the high duties we owe to our constituents, to our national character, and to the world."

The French Chargé des Affaires was ordered home, and all intercourse between the two governments ceased. Neither government could yield without destroying itself, and the people of both countries were in the temper that precedes and provokes hostilities. Many members of Congress who had opposed General Jackson's fiscal measures, his tariff policy, his land policy, his Indian policy, his proscriptive policy, gave him the most cordial support in his attempt to compel the payment of the French indemnity. No one did so with so much effect as Mr. John Quincy Adams. "Sir," exclaimed Mr. Adams, on one occasion, in the House, "this treaty has been ratified on both sides of the ocean ; it has received the sign manual of the sovereign of France, through his Imperial Majesty's principal Minister of State ; it has been ratified by the Senate of this republic ; it has been sanctioned by Almighty God ; and still we are told, in a voice potential, in the other wing of this capitol, that the arrogance of France—nay, sir, not of France, but of her Chamber of Deputies—

the insolence of the French Chambers must be submitted to, and we must come down to the *lower* degradation of reöpening negotiations to attain that which has already been acknowledged to be our due ! Sir, is this a specimen of your boasted chivalry ? Is this an evidence of the existence of that heroic valor which has so often led our arms on to glory and immortality ? Reöpen negotiations, sir, with France ? Do it, and soon you will find your flag insulted, dishonored, and trodden in the dust by the pigmy States of Asia and Africa—by the very banditti of the earth.”

Mr. Seward records that the effect produced by this speech was such, that, for some time after the orator ceased, the House was “lost” in excitement. As the aged statesman sank back exhausted into his chair, “the very walls shook with the thundering applause he had awakened.”

The darkest hour is just before the morning. The message of the President, announcing Mr. Barton’s return home, and vaguely alluding to the hostile movements of the French fleet, was sent to the capitol on the 18th of January. Three weeks later, February 8th, the President, in a brief but pregnant message, informed Congress that the government of Great Britain had offered its mediation, and that he had accepted the offer. He had, at the same time, notified the mediating power that the apology demanded by France was totally out of the question. He recommended Congress to suspend proceedings upon the non-intercourse act, but to continue those preparations for defense which would become immediately necessary if the mediation failed. The President said that he “highly appreciated the elevated and disinterested motives” which prompted the offer of mediation, and that he relied much upon “the great influence of Britain to restore the relations of ancient friendship between France and the United States.”

The affair was settled in a very few days. February 22d the President had the pleasure of informing Congress that France had accepted the offer of mediation as soon as it was made, and that there was every reason to hope for a speedy

termination of the dispute. On the 10th of May he sent the following communication to the capitol: "Information has been received at the treasury department that the FOUR INSTALMENTS UNDER OUR TREATY WITH FRANCE HAVE BEEN PAID TO THE AGENT OF THE UNITED STATES. In communicating this satisfactory termination of our controversy with France, I feel assured that both Houses of Congress will unite with me in desiring and believing that the anticipations of the restoration of the ancient cordial relations between the two countries, expressed in my former messages on this subject, will be speedily realized. No proper exertions of mine shall be wanting to efface the remembrance of those misconceptions that have temporarily interrupted the accustomed intercourse between them."

General Cass retired soon after from the War Department, and went to represent the United States at the French court. The French minister resumed his residence in Washington. Louis Philippe conceived the highest idea of General Jackson's resolution and ability. A few years later, he commissioned an artist to paint a portrait of the General for the Tuileries, which was the last portrait ever taken of General Jackson. In other ways the king gave proof of his particular esteem for the character of the General. I have been told that the Duke of Wellington applauded, in his brief, idiomatic manner, the spirit with which General Jackson had maintained the rights of his country in this affair. The people of the United States, when the danger of war was over, and the complete success of General Jackson became apparent, applauded his conduct with nearly as much unanimity as enthusiasm. In the newspapers of the opposition I find the warmest encomiums of the measures which secured the payment of the French indemnity.

## CHAPTER XLI.

## OTHER EVENTS OF 1835 AND 1836.

THE eighth of January, 1835, was the day which General Jackson esteemed the most glorious of his presidency. It was the anniversary of the battle of New Orleans, which has now been for forty-five years celebrated in the United States as a party festival. In 1835, the occasion was seized by the democratic leaders to celebrate also the payment of the last instalment of the national debt. The President had looked forward to the extinguishment of that debt as he would have done to the deliverance of his own estate, if it had been heavily mortgaged, or as a western pioneer anticipates the day when his farm shall be completely his own. Financiers of the Biddle school, some of whom proclaimed the national debt a national blessing, regarded the solicitude of the President on this subject as primitive and puerile. It may be safely predicted that to a policy just as primitive and puerile all financiering will come at last. Out of debt ! The honest citizen feels the magic of the words. Out of debt ! The public man of the future will be contented with little less for his country.

The party made the most of this auspicious event. A banquet of extraordinary magnificence was given at Washington on the eighth of January, 1835. Col. Benton presided. Among the Vice-Presidents were James K. Polk, Silas Wright, William R. King, Henry A. Muhlenberg, Isaac Hill, John Y. Mason, and E. K. Kane. The distinguished guest of the occasion was the rising sun, Mr. Van Buren. General Jackson declined to attend, but sent a toast : " The Payment of the Public Debt. Let us commemorate it as an event which gives us increased power as a nation, and reflects luster on our federal Union, of whose justice, fidelity, and wisdom it is a glorious illustration."

Col. Benton entered into the affair with peculiar en-



thusiasm. Upon the removal of the cloth, he delivered an exulting little speech, which was one of his most characteristic efforts. "The national debt," he exclaimed, "is paid ! This month of January, 1835, in the 58th year of the republic, Andrew Jackson being President, the national debt is paid ! and the apparition, so long unseen on earth—a great nation without a national debt !—stands revealed to the astonished vision of a wondering world ! Gentlemen," he concluded, "my heart is in this double celebration ; and I offer you a sentiment, which, coming direct from my own bosom, will find its response in yours :

"PRESIDENT JACKSON : May the evening of his days be as tranquil and as happy for himself as their meridian has been resplendent, glorious, and beneficent for his country."

If we may believe the authorized report published in a pamphlet, and printed by the ten thousand, the number of toasts offered at this banquet was about one hundred. An impossible number. From the character of many of these sentiments, it is evident that the politicians of that day knew the weak place in the President's heart. The adulation of the President on this occasion, was shameful to human nature. There seems to have been a strife among the guests which of them could coin a sentence of the most ingenious and original flattery. Take a few specimens :

By MR. WOODBURY.—*The President of the United States*. Venerable in years—illustrious in deeds.

By MR. FORSYTH.—*The Battle of New Orleans*. Not more glorious for the valor which achieved the victory, than for the humanity displayed in alleviating the sufferings of the vanquished foe.

By MR. DICKERSON.—*The Eighth of January, 1815*. An important era in the history of America—second only to the 4th of July, 1776.

By COL. RICHARD M. JOHNSON.—*Andrew Jackson at the battle of New Orleans*. He prevented *booty*, and he protected *beauty*.

By MR. SILAS WRIGHT.—*The Citizen Soldier*. The strength and security of free governments. WASHINGTON, LAFAYETTE, and JACKSON have personified the character.

These are about *one twelfth* of the toasts printed in the report that expressly extolled the President on his favorite

measures. The agency that General Jackson had in the discharge of the national debt was simply this : He vetoed bills appropriating money for internal improvements. These vetoes suspended the internal improvement system, and caused the public debt to be extinguished two or three years, perhaps, five years, sooner than it would have been if Mr. Adams had been reëlected in 1828.

There is always some one to remind the most idolized man that he is mortal. If General Jackson was unduly elevated by the glorification which he received on the eighth of January, an event occurred on the thirtieth of the same month, which excited in his mind feelings of another character. On that day, the President, the Cabinet, both Houses of Congress, and a concourse of citizens, assembled in the hall of the House of Representatives to take part in the funeral ceremonies in honor of a deceased member of the House from South Carolina. After the usual solemnities, a procession was formed to escort the body to the grave. The President, near the head of the procession, accompanied by Mr. Woodbury and Mr. Dickerson, had crossed the great rotunda of the capitol, and was about to step out upon the portico, when a man emerged from the crowd, and, placing himself before the President, at the distance of eight feet from him, leveled a pistol at his breast, and pulled the trigger. The cap exploded with a loud report without discharging the pistol. The man dropped the pistol upon the pavement, and raised a second which he had held in his left hand under his cloak. That also missed fire. The President, the instant he comprehended the purpose of the man, rushed furiously at him with uplifted cane. Before he reached him, Lieutenant Gedney of the navy had knocked the assassin down, and he was immediately secured and taken to jail. The President, boiling with rage, was hurried into a carriage by his friends and conveyed to the White House. For some days, his belief remained unshaken that the man had been set on to attempt his destruction by a clique of his political enemies.

The prisoner was proved to be a lunatic. His name was

Lawrence. He was an English house painter, who had been long out of employment. Hearing, on all sides, that the country had been ruined by the measures of General Jackson, the project of assassinating him had fastened itself in his crazy brain. The physicians who examined him reported: "He stated, that believing the President to be the source of all his difficulties, he was still fixed in his purpose to kill him, and if his successor pursued the same course, to put him out of the way also—and declared that no power in this country could punish him for having done so, because it would be resisted by the powers of Europe, as well as of this country. He also stated, that he had been long in correspondence with the powers of Europe, and that his family had been wrongfully deprived of the crown of England, and that he should yet live to regain it—and that he considered the President of the United States nothing more than his clerk. We now think proper to add, that the young man appears perfectly tranquil and unconcerned, as to the final result, and seems to anticipate no punishment for what he has done."

Lawrence was placed in an asylum; and the affair, which, at first, had assumed portentous importance, soon ceased to be a topic of remark. The insinuations of the *Globe*, that "a secret conspiracy had prompted the perpetration of the horrible deed," do not appear to have obtained more than a momentary belief even among the devotees of the party. It was a curious illustration of the changeful nature of party ties, that the gentleman whom the President most suspected of a participation in the attempt to assassinate him was that very George Poindexter, of Mississippi, who had so eloquently defended General Jackson during the Seminole War debates of 1819.

Among the great crowd who attended this funeral and witnessed part of the scene we have briefly described, was Miss Martineau, who, in her "Retrospect of Western Travel," gives some curious particulars of the subsequent excitement in Washington:

"It so happened that we were engaged to a party at Mr. Poindexter's the very evening of this attack upon the President. There was so tremendous a thunder storm that our host and hostess were disappointed of almost all their guests except ourselves, and we had difficulty in merely crossing the street, being obliged to have planks laid across the flood, which gushed between the carriage and the steps of the door. The conversation naturally turned upon the event of the morning. I knew little of the quarrel which was now to be so dreadfully aggravated; but the more I afterward heard, the more I admired the moderation with which Mr. Poindexter spoke of his foe that night, and as often as I subsequently met him.

"I had intended to visit the President the day after the funeral; but I heard so much of his determination to consider the attack a political affair, and I had so little wish to hear it so treated, against the better knowledge of all the world, that I stayed away as long as I could. Before I went, I was positively assured of Lawrence's insanity by one of the physicians who were appointed to visit him. One of the poor creature's complaints was that General Jackson deprived him of the British crown, to which he was heir. When I did go to the White House, I took the briefest possible notice to the President of the 'insane attempt' of Lawrence; but the word roused his ire. He protested, in the presence of many strangers, that there was no insanity in the case. I was silent, of course. He protested that there was a plot, and that the man was a tool, and at length quoted the Attorney-General as his authority. It was painful to hear a chief ruler publicly trying to persuade a foreigner that any of his constituents hated him to the death; and I took the liberty of changing the subject as soon as I could. The next evening I was at the Attorney-General's, and I asked him how he could let himself be quoted as saying that Lawrence was not mad. He excused himself by saying that he meant general insanity. He believed Lawrence insane in one direction; that it was a sort of Ravallac case. I besought him to impress the President with this view of the case as soon as might be."

The summer of 1835 is memorable as the time when the agitation of the slavery question began to assume the intensity and bitterness which has characterized it since. At that period, and for some time after it, the people of the Northern States were so generally averse to the discussion of the subject that a man could not deliver an anti-slavery lecture, or publish an anti-slavery newspaper, without running an imminent risk of being mobbed and murdered. In Boston, New York, Philadelphia, and Cincinnati, violent scenes

were exhibited, with the inevitable effect of inflaming the zeal of the party assailed. The attacks upon Mr. Garrison, the murder of Mr. Lovejoy, the offering of twenty thousand dollars for the head of Mr. Arthur Tappan, the attempt to deprive the people of the right of petition—what effect could such proceedings have but to invest the abolition leaders with the character of martyrs, and to infuse into their hearts the energy and fire that inspired the martyrs of old ?

Few were the abolitionists in number, but their activity was constant. Among the measures devised by them for the spread of their doctrines was the dissemination of pamphlets and newspapers in the Southern States. Some subscribers were obtained in the South for abolition papers, and large numbers of tracts and periodicals were sent to Southern men who were conspicuous supporters of the Southern system. Besides these, pictures representing slavery in its worst aspects were sent to the South through the mail, and otherwise. Col. Benton said in the Senate this year that “many pictures, as well as many diabolical publications on this subject, had been sent to him, the whole of which he had cast into the fire.”

The circulation of these pictures and publications through the mail excited the anger and the fear of some of the Southern people. In Charleston, the public excitement was such, during the summer of 1835, that the postmaster feared for the safety of the mails. He was warned by the press and by assemblages of the people not to deliver abolition pamphlets and periodicals, no matter to whom they were directed. In these circumstances he wrote to the Postmaster-General for instructions.

A change had taken place in the Post-Office Department. Mr. Barry had resigned his place, and accepted the mission to Spain. Mr. Amos Kendall, long known to the country as a member of the kitchen cabinet, was appointed Postmaster-General. Upon receiving the letter of the postmaster of Charleston, the administration was placed in an embarrassing situation, from which it could have escaped only by an

act of honest boldness, which would have jeopardized the election of Mr. Van Buren to the presidency.

In deciding upon the course to be pursued, General Jackson proved unfaithful, as I think, to the rights and the interests of the South. He receded from the positions of his nullification message. One would have expected him to say: "My fellow-citizens of the South shall be protected in their right to receive whatever they choose through the United States mail. If but one man in Charleston has subscribed to an abolition paper, it shall be delivered to him, though it require an army and a fleet to effect it. And as to those publications which have been sent without having been ordered, the persons to whom they are addressed, and they only, shall decide whether to take them from the post-office or not. It is their right to do this; and I, as the sworn protector of the individual against all who would wrong him, will employ in their protection the power and resources of the nation, intrusted to me for that purpose."

General Jackson held no such language as this. He might have taken such a position and safely maintained it. From what evils he would have saved his country and his South, if he had done so! He permitted Mr. Kendall to reply to the postmaster of Charleston in the extraordinary terms following:

THE POSTMASTER-GENERAL TO THE POSTMASTER OF CHARLESTON.

"POST OFFICE DEPARTMENT,  
"August 4th, 1835.

"SIR: In your letter of the 29th ult., just received, you inform me that by the steamboat mail from New York your office had been filled with pamphlets and tracts upon slavery; that the public mind was highly excited upon the subject; that you doubted the safety of the mail itself out of your possession; that you had determined, as the wisest course, to detain these papers; and you now ask instructions from the department.

"Upon a careful examination of the law, I am satisfied that the Postmaster-General has no legal authority to exclude newspapers from the mail, nor prohibit their carriage or delivery on account of their character or tendency, real or supposed. Probably it was not thought safe to confer

on the head of an executive department a power over the press, which might be perverted and abused.

"But I am not prepared to direct you to forward or deliver the papers of which you speak. The Post-Office Department was created to serve the people of *each* and *all* of the *United States*, and not to be used as the instrument of their *destruction*. None of the papers detained have been forwarded to me, and I can not judge for myself of their character and tendency; but you inform me that they are, in character, 'the most inflammatory and incendiary, and insurrectionary in the highest degree.'

"By no act or direction of mine, official or private, could I be induced to aid, knowingly, in giving circulation to papers of this description, directly or indirectly. We owe an obligation to the laws, but a higher one to the communities in which we live, and if the *former* be perverted to destroy the *latter*, it is patriotism to disregard them. Entertaining these views, I can not sanction, and will not condemn the step you have taken.

"Your justification must be looked for in the character of the papers detained, and the circumstances by which you are surrounded.

"I am, etc.,

"AMOS KENDALL."

This was a palpable shirking of the responsibility. The postmaster of Charleston was in a dilemma, and asked instructions from his chief. The chief would neither "sanction" nor "condemn," nor even advise, but left the subaltern totally without assistance. Amos Kendall's letter lost the administration the support of the most honest, disinterested, and able of its editorial allies—William Leggett, of the *New York Evening Post*. But it secured Mr. Kendall's confirmation in the Senate; it strengthened the party in the South; and took some available wind from the sails of Mr. Calhoun.

The message of 1835, the last but one of General Jackson's annual communications to Congress, demands a moment's attention from us. The country seemed to the President prosperous beyond example. The financial measures of the administration were producing their stimulating effect. "Every branch of labor," the President said, "we see crowned with the most abundant rewards; in every element of national resources and wealth, and individual comfort, we wit-

ness the most rapid and solid improvement." The national debt was paid, and there was a surplus in the treasury of eleven millions. The proceeds of the sales of the public lands, during the year, had reached the amazing amount of eleven millions of dollars : and such was the pressure of business upon the land office, that the mere manual labor of signing documents absorbed the time and exhausted the strength of the Commissioner.

The President's love of a hard currency appeared conspicuously in this message. The State banks, strengthened by the government deposits, and disposed to comply with all the reasonable requirements of the government, would gladly cooperate with Congress in the suppression of notes under twenty dollars. "The attainment of such a result will form," said the message, "an era in the history of our country which will be dwelt upon with delight by every true friend of its liberty and independence. It will lighten the great tax which our paper system has so long collected from the earnings of labor, and do more to revive and perpetuate those habits of economy and simplicity, which are so congenial to the character of republicans, than all the legislation which has yet been attempted."

In dealing with the subject of "incendiary publications," the President's message was more guarded and more right than the letter of Mr. Kendall. The President was careful to specify only such publications as were "addressed to the passions of slaves, and calculated to stimulate them to insurrection, and to produce all the horrors of a servile war." He called "the special attention of Congress to the subject," and suggested "the passage of a law to prohibit, under severe penalties, the circulation in the Southern States, through the mail, of incendiary publications intended to instigate the slaves to insurrection."

With an emphatic repetition of the President's opinion respecting the election of President and Vice-President, the message of 1835 concluded.

A bill with regard to anti-slavery publications was intro-



duced by Mr. Calhoun, early in the session, which went far beyond the suggestions of the President's message. This bill forbade postmasters to receive *any* publication or picture touching the subject of slavery, which should be addressed to an individual residing in a slave State. The bill was lost. I allude to it for the sake of two incidents of the debate. In one of his speeches upon the bill, Mr. Calhoun again had the insolence to threaten Congress with nullification, in case the bill were not passed. "I must tell the Senate," said he, "be your decision what it may, the South will never abandon the principles of this bill. If you refuse coöperation with our laws, and conflict should ensue between your and our law, the Southern States will never yield to the superiority of yours. We have a remedy in our hands, which, in such events, we shall not fail to apply. We have high authority for asserting that, in such cases, 'State interposition is the rightful remedy'—a doctrine first announced by Jefferson, adopted by the patriotic and republican State of Kentucky, by a solemn resolution, in 1798, and finally carried out into successful practice on a recent occasion, ever to be remembered, by the gallant State which I, in part, have the honor to represent."

But the most memorable event of this debate was the contrivance of a tie in the Senate, to compel Mr. Van Buren to vote upon the bill. The object of this maneuver was to destroy Mr. Van Buren as a candidate for the presidency. It was supposed that if he voted for the measure, the North would abandon him ; and if he voted against it, he was lost at the South. It was Mr. Calhoun who arranged the tie, and it was he who, at the right moment, demanded the yeas and nays. When the vote was about to be taken upon the engrossment of the bill, the Vice-President, as Col. Benton records, was out of his chair, walking behind the colonnade. "My eyes," adds Benton, "were wide open as to what was to take place. Mr. Calhoun, not seeing him, eagerly and loudly asked where was the Vice-President ? and told the Sergeant-at-arms to look for him. But he needed no looking for. He was within hearing of all that passed, and ready for

ness the most rapid and solid improvement." The national debt was paid, and there was a surplus in the treasury of eleven millions. The proceeds of the sales of the public lands, during the year, had reached the amazing amount of eleven millions of dollars ; and such was the pressure of business upon the land office, that the mere manual labor of signing documents absorbed the time and exhausted the strength of the Commissioner.

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With an emphatic repetition of the President's opinion respecting the election of President and Vice-President, the message of 1835 concluded.

A bill with regard to anti-slavery publications was intro-

duced by Mr. Calhoun, early in the session, which went far beyond the suggestions of the President's message. This bill forbade postmasters to receive *any* publication or picture touching the subject of slavery, which should be addressed to an individual residing in a slave State. The bill was lost. I allude to it for the sake of two incidents of the debate. In one of his speeches upon the bill, Mr. Calhoun again had the insolence to threaten Congress with nullification, in case the bill were not passed. "I must tell the Senate," said he, "be your decision what it may, the South will never abandon the principles of this bill. If you refuse coöperation with our laws, and conflict should ensue between your and our law, the Southern States will never yield to the superiority of yours. We have a remedy in our hands, which, in such events, we shall not fail to apply. We have high authority for asserting that, in such cases, 'State interposition is the rightful remedy'—a doctrine first announced by Jefferson, adopted by the patriotic and republican State of Kentucky, by a solemn resolution, in 1798, and finally carried out into successful practice on a recent occasion, ever to be remembered, by the gallant State which I, in part, have the honor to represent."

But the most memorable event of this debate was the contrivance of a tie in the Senate, to compel Mr. Van Buren to vote upon the bill. The object of this maneuver was to destroy Mr. Van Buren as a candidate for the presidency. It was supposed that if he voted for the measure, the North would abandon him ; and if he voted against it, he was lost at the South. It was Mr. Calhoun who arranged the tie, and it was he who, at the right moment, demanded the yeas and nays. When the vote was about to be taken upon the engrossment of the bill, the Vice-President, as Col. Benton records, was out of his chair, walking behind the colonnade. "My eyes," adds Benton, "were wide open as to what was to take place. Mr. Calhoun, not seeing him, eagerly and loudly asked where was the Vice-President ? and told the Sergeant-at-arms to look for him. But he needed no looking for. He was within hearing of all that passed, and ready for

the contingency : and immediately stepping up to his chair, and standing up, promptly gave the casting vote in favor of the engrossment. I deemed it a political vote, that is to say, given from policy ; and I deemed it justifiable under the circumstances."

These were not the only political votes given at this session. Again Congress had to grapple with an enormous and increasing surplus in the treasury. In dealing with it, the opposition displayed the same want of wisdom which seems to me to have marked their conduct from the beginning to the end of General Jackson's administration. They made no attempt to lessen or prevent the surplus, because to have done that effectually they would have been compelled to adopt General Jackson's oft-repeated suggestions with regard to the public lands. It was speculations in the public lands that created the surplus. General Jackson's three simple and grand ideas with regard to the disposal of the public domain had only to be enacted into a law, and the surplus had ceased. Sell the land, said the General, only to actual settlers ; sell it in limited quantities ; sell it at the bare cost of surveying and selling. A measure embodying these three principles would have laid the ax at the root of the difficulty.

Consider, for a moment, the state of things at the time. On the 1st of January, 1834, the banking capital of the country was two hundred millions ; the bank notes in circulation amounted to ninety-five millions ; the bank loans and discounts, to three hundred and twenty-four millions. On the 1st of January, 1836, the banking capital had increased to two hundred and fifty-one millions ; the paper issues, to one hundred and forty millions ! the loans and discounts to four hundred and fifty-seven millions ! Result—universal expansion of business, and great increase in the price of all commodities save one. That sole exception was the public land, the price of which was fixed by law at a dollar and a quarter per acre. Hence arose that mad speculation in the public lands which, in 1835 and 1836, filled the treasury to overflowing with paper promises-to-pay.

No event of that period affords so striking an illustration of the state of things as the great New York fire of December, 1835. In a night, property to the amount of eighteen millions of dollars was destroyed ; fifty-two acres of the wholesale business region of the city were covered with ruins ; five hundred and twenty-eight buildings were burned. Nine months after the fire, nearly all traces of it had been obliterated ; the burnt region was covered with stores larger and handsomer than those which had been destroyed ; and all this, without the failure or the suspension of a single firm ! Nay, many men were enriched by the catastrophe.

It was in such a state of things that Congress entered upon the discussion of the question : What shall we do with the surplus revenue ?—a surplus, be it remembered, which was then deposited in the State banks, and which had stimulated the business of the country to the alarming extent indicated above. The plan proposed by Mr. Calhoun, adopted by Congress, and not vetoed by the President, amounted to this : *Let us deposit more of the public money with the States, and place it on permanent deposit, instead of temporary.*

The State deposit act of 1836 provided that the surplus above five millions, at the end of every year, should be divided among the States ; that the States were to give to the federal government certificates of deposit, payable to the United States ; that the Secretary of the Treasury could sell or assign these certificates whenever he needed the money to meet appropriations ; that the certificates, when sold or assigned, should bear an interest of five per cent. ; that the deposits not sold or assigned should bear no interest ; and, finally, that deposits could be returned to the Secretary of the Treasury at the pleasure of any State holding them. This measure was well described by Col. Benton when he said : “ It is, in name, a deposit ; in form, a loan ; in essence and design, a distribution. Names can not alter things ; and it is as idle to call a gift a deposit, as it would be to call a stab of the dagger a kiss of the lips. It is a distribution of the revenues, under the name of a deposit, and under the form of a loan.

It is known to be so, and is intended to be so : and all this verbiage about a deposit is nothing but the device and contrivance of those who have been for years endeavoring to distribute the revenues, sometimes by the land bill, sometimes by direct propositions, and sometimes by proposed amendments to the constitution."

There is too much reason to believe that the passage of this bill was due to the supposed necessities of presidential candidates. It passed by extraordinary majorities, both parties desirous to share the popularity of the contemplated distribution. Col. Benton intimates that the same motive induced the President to give the measure his assent. "The bill was approved by the President," says the author of the "Thirty Years' View," "but with a repugnance of feeling and a recoil of judgment which it required great efforts of friends to overcome ; and with a regret for it afterwards which he often and publicly expressed. It was understood that some of Mr. Van Buren's friends favored the President's approval, and recommended him to sign it—induced by the supposed effect which its rejection might have on the democratic party in the election. The opponents of the bill did not visit the President to give him their opinions, nor had he heard their arguments. If they had seen him, their opinions concurring with his own feelings and judgment, his conduct might have been different, and the approval of the act withheld."

Congress sat until the fourth of July. Before the adjournment, Col. Benton, who, almost alone among the public men of the day, saw the ruin that awaited the country if the land speculations continued, attempted to introduce a measure to compel purchasers of public lands to pay for them in specie. The proceeds of the sales of public lands had risen from four millions a year to five millions a quarter, and they were still on the increase. Col. Benton's proposition met with no encouragement in a body, a majority of whose members were interested in the very speculations which it was designed to check. One week after Congress adjourned,

the President, upon his own authority, against the known will of Congress, against the advice of a majority of his cabinet, issued that famous "Specie Circular," which ordered all land commissioners, after a certain date, to reject paper money in payment of public lands, and to accept gold and silver only. Col. Benton, in his rapid, graphic manner, tells us how and why this order was issued: "The President saw the public lands fleeing away—saw that Congress would not interfere—and knew the majority of his cabinet to be against his interference. He did as he had often done in councils of war—called the council together to hear a decision. He summoned his cabinet, laid the case before them, heard the majority of adverse opinions, and directed the order to issue. His private secretary, Mr. Donelson, was directed to prepare a draught of the order. The author of this 'View' was all the while in the office of this private secretary. Mr. Donelson came to him with the President's decision, and requested him to draw up the order. It was done; the rough draft carried back to the council, put into official form, signed, issued. It was a second edition of the removal of the deposits scene, and made an immense sensation. The disappointed speculators raged. Congress was considered insulted, the cabinet defied, the banks disgraced."

The specie circular was eighteen months too late. Issued in the spring of 1835, it had saved the country. Issued in July, 1836, it could only precipitate the crash which had then become inevitable. Its chief effect was to draw gold and silver from the eastern to the western States, and the pressure in the money market, which had already begun, increased from that time. It was severe during the autumn months; severer during the winter; severest in the spring. Unrelieved for a single week, the pressure increased steadily from May, 1836, until it ended in the stupendous ruin of May, 1837.

In November, 1836, General Jackson beheld the consummation of his most cherished hopes in the election of Mr. Van Buren to the presidency.

Mr. Clay, despairing of success, despairing almost of his

country, had shrunk from the contest. "You seem to think," he wrote to Judge Brooke, "that I despond as to our public affairs. If you mean that I have less confidence than I formerly entertained in the virtue and intelligence of the people, and in the stability of our institutions, I regret to be obliged to own it. Are we not governed now, and have we not been for some time past, pretty much by the will of one man? And do not large masses of the people, perhaps a majority, seem disposed to follow him wherever he leads, through all his inconsistencies? If that single man were an enlightened philosopher, and a true patriot, the popular sanction which is given to all his acts, however inconsistent or extravagant, might find some justification. But when we consider that he is ignorant, passionate, hypocritical, corrupt, and easily swayed by the base men who surround him, what can we think of the popular approbation which he receives? One thing only was wanted to complete the public degradation, and that was that he should name his successor."

General Harrison and Francis Granger were the whig candidates; Martin Van Buren and Richard M. Johnson the democratic. If these had been the only names presented to the people, Mr. Van Buren would have been chosen by a majority only less decided than that which had reëlected General Jackson in 1832. But Judge White, of Tennessee, long the friend and supporter of General Jackson, but long the bitter enemy of Mr. Van Buren, permitted his name to be used by a democratic faction for the purpose of defeating the favorite of his old chief. Colonel Benton tells us, in one place, that Judge White was "instigated to divide the democratic party, and defeat Mr. Van Buren," by Mr. Calhoun; and, in another place, that he was induced to run by the solicitations of an ambitious wife. Strange to relate, Tennessee, from an early period of the canvass, showed a particular disinclination to support General Jackson's candidate. Tennessee and Georgia cast their votes for Judge White. South Carolina again threw her vote away upon a candidate named in no other State—Willie P. Mangum. Massachusetts wasted



her vote upon Daniel Webster. Harrison and Granger received the votes of Vermont, New Jersey, Delaware, Maryland, Indiana, Kentucky, and Ohio—seventy-three. Mr. Van Buren triumphed in Maine, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, Pennsylvania, Virginia, North Carolina, Louisiana, Mississippi, Illinois, Alabama, Missouri, Arkansas, Michigan—one hundred and seventy. There was no choice of Vice-President by the people, as the votes of four States were given to Mr. Tyler. The Senate, upon whom the election devolves in such cases, gave the office to Colonel Richard M. Johnson.

The private letters of General Jackson show that he was overjoyed at the result of the election—a result which, for seven years, he had eagerly anticipated, and to promote which he had, for seven years, schemed and labored. It was a signal triumph, for it was one which secured to him all the objects nearest his heart. Mr. Van Buren, who, in conjunction with Edward Livingston, had given to General Jackson's administration its strong Jeffersonian flavor, was not likely, thought the General, to abandon the principles which he believed to be at once right and popular ; good for the country and safe for the party. The election of Mr. Van Buren dismayed the opposition, stung Calhoun, deprived the bank party of its last hope, and secured in their places the great army of Jacksonian office-holders.

Leaving the State of New York out of the canvass, the election of Mr. Van Buren to the presidency was as much the act of General Jackson, as though the constitution had conferred upon him the power to appoint his successor. Nor was Mr. Van Buren particularly active in the matter. Feeling sure of General Jackson's preference, relying on that, knowing that to be the strength of his position, he seems to have been comparatively indifferent to other means of support. The correspondence, published by Mr. McKenzie, between Mr. Van Buren and his most intimate friends, all tends to confirm this impression.

When James Gordon Bennett wrote to Jesse Hoyt imploring pecuniary aid from Mr. Van Buren, of whose cause Mr. Bennett had long been a stanch supporter, Mr. Van Buren replied : " If Mr. Bennett can not continue friendly to me on public grounds and with perfect independence, I can only regret it, but I desire no other support. Whatever course he may pursue, as long as it is an honest one, I shall wish him well. He does not understand the relation between the editors he quarrels with and myself, or he would not complain of me for their acts. They are as independent of me in the management of their papers, as I wish him to be, and remain."

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## CHAPTER XLII.

### WHITE HOUSE ANECDOTES.

It belongs to our task to show how General Jackson, when President of the United States, appeared to those who conversed and associated with him. The material here is superabundant and interesting, but somewhat unmanageable.

He lived always in a crowd. The city of Washington, we may premise, was the unforeseen result of an after-dinner conversation between Hamilton, Jefferson, and two or three "Potomac members" of Congress. Hamilton, finding himself in a minority upon one of his fiscal measures, implored the aid of Jefferson's influence over the Virginia delegation. "Dine with me to-morrow," said Jefferson, "and I will invite some of the opposing members to meet you." After dinner, the subject was discussed, and two members agreed to change their votes—to save the Union, of course. It was observed, by one of the gentlemen present, that the measure proposed would prove so repugnant to the Southern people, that "some concomitant measure should be adopted to sweeten it to them a little." A lump of sugar would be needful after

the medicine. The lump of sugar proposed and swallowed was, the selection of a site for the permanent capitol of the country in the wilderness on the banks of the Potomac. In how many ways have the fortunes and the morals of the United States been influenced by that talk over Mr. Jefferson's mahogany in the year 1790 !

The city has never lost its extempore character. It is more like a camp than a town. Not a camp in which an army rests for a night ; but a camp such as we may imagine those " winter-quarters " to have been, into which, winter after winter, Cæsar led his victorious legions. The White House has more in common with the marquee of a commander-in-chief than the home of a civilized family. As in a camp, too, every one is esteemed according to his rank in the service, so, in Washington, a man is honored for the office he holds. Shut out from all the world, like boys in a college, the honors of the place, which seem trivial at a distance, become objects of desire as intense as that which impels ambitious youths to wear out their days and nights in competing for a medal or a book.

Amid the bustle, and throng, and strife of Washington, General Jackson maintained the same easy and profuse hospitality to which he had been accustomed at the Hermitage, and every one of his thousands of guests brought away something curious to tell of him. He was one of those positive and peculiar men whose commonest action becomes an anecdote, and I have, consequently, accumulated a mass of anecdotal reminiscences of him, which I can not withhold, but know not how to compress into reasonable compass. I may add, before going further, that the liberal hospitality of the White House compelled the President to eke out his salary by drawing upon the proceeds of his farm. Before leaving Washington in 1837, he had to send for six thousand dollars of the proceeds of his cotton crop in order to pay the debts which his last year's salary failed to cover. In the spring of 1836, when the Hermitage was damaged by fire to the extent of three thousand dollars, he was really embarrassed to find

the means of repairing and refurnishing it. He wrote to a friend in Philadelphia: "I have directed my son to offer for sale a piece of valuable land in Tennessee. I find this will be necessary before I can venture to incur the responsibility of another purchase. Here I have no control of my expenses, and can calculate nothing on my salary." His son Andrew was then a married man and a father; a circumstance that added greatly to the General's happiness, and considerably to his expenditures.

But to our purpose. We are to observe, first, how the President impressed those foreign visitors whom curiosity attracted to the official mansion.

An English traveler, who recorded his recollections in the "New Monthly Magazine," drew a portrait of the General that was very striking.

"General Jackson," he wrote, "is tall, bony, and thin, with an erect military bearing, and a head set within a considerable *fiercé* upon his shoulders. A stranger would at once pronounce upon his profession: and his frame, features, voice, and action, have a natural and most peculiar warlikeness. He has (not to speak disrespectfully) a *game-cock look* all over him. His face is unlike any other: its prevailing expression is energy; but there is, so to speak, a lofty honorableness in its thin worn lines, combined with a penetrating and sage look of talent, that would single him out, even among extraordinary men, as a person of a more than usually superior cast. He looks like the last person in the world to be 'humbugged;' and yet a caricature of him would make an admirable Don Quixote. In the days of chivalry he would have been the mirror of tried soldiers—an old iron-gray knight invincible and lion-like, but something stiff in his courtesy. His eye is of a dangerous fixedness, deep set, and overhung by bushy gray eyebrows, his features long, with strong, ridgy lines running through his cheeks; his forehead a good deal seamed; and his white hair, stiff and wiry, brushed obstinately back, and worn quite with an expression of a *chevaux de frise* of bayonets. In his mouth there is a redeeming suavity as he speaks; but the instant his lips close, a vizor of steel would scarcely look more impenetrable. His manners are dignified, and have been called high-bred and aristocratic by travelers; but, to my mind, are the model of republican simplicity and straightforwardness. He is quite a man one would be proud to show as the exponent of the manners of his country. General Jackson would be a bad diplomatist in Europe, or any where, without power. He has but one *cheval de bataille*—he rides

down and breaks through every thing that other men would think of avoiding or circumventing. He cuts all gordian knots. He is no 'head to creep into crevices.' Having made up his mind as to his aim, and trusting to his own directness of purpose, he shuts his eyes, like the monarch of the herd, and charges—generally with success. His passions are said to be tremendously violent; and a long life has but little subdued their warmth. His paroxysms are not unfrequent; and sooth to say, he has often cause: for never was man so crossed and thwarted as he has been in his administration. His stern uprightness and singleness of mind, however, bring him well through. His immediate passion is soon over, but his purpose does not evaporate with his anger; and he has shown, since he has been in power, some rather startling specimens of his inflexibility."

To this I may add that the portrait which accompanies this volume is the most successful of our attempts to furnish a correct engraving of General Jackson. It is a little triumph in its way. It gives the most exact idea of the President as he used to appear in the streets of Washington. The picture from which it was taken was painted in the White House, by Mr. Earl, for the "successful politician" whose recollections are elsewhere recorded. Some of the most characteristic and life-like portraits of the General are to be found in the caricatures of the time, of which an extraordinary number were produced during the last five years of his presidency. Even at this late day, I have been able to collect twenty, in which General Jackson is the principal figure.

Miss Kemble, who was "starring" then through the country with her father, was "presented to the President in due form," during one of her Washington engagements. She describes him in her journal as "very tall and thin, but erect and dignified; a good specimen of a fine old, well-battered soldier; his manners perfectly simple and quiet, and, therefore, very good." She adds that "he talked about South Carolina, and entered his protest against scribbling ladies, assuring us that the whole of the southern disturbances had their origin in no larger a source than the nib of the pen of a lady." The lady referred to by the President was, possibly, one of the "set" opposed to Mrs. Eaton—perhaps the wife of a colonel who figured in that affair.

Mr. Stuart, a Scotch traveler, whose "Three Years in North America" was a book of note twenty-five years ago, recorded his observations of the President. He saw him first at church, where the General listened with evident delight to his favorite preacher, Dr. Durbin. "Nothing," says the traveler, "struck me more than seeing him mixing in the passages of the church with the rest of the congregation, as a private individual, and conversing with such of them as he knew on going out, without the slightest official assumption. He bowed to Mr. Kennedy, in the seat where I was. The President has very little the appearance or gait of a soldier, as I have been accustomed to them. He is extremely spare in his habit of body—at first sight not altogether unlike Shakespeare's starved apothecary—but he is not an ungentle man in manner and appearance, and there are marks of good humor, as well as of decision of character, in his countenance."

The opinion of Mr. Duane respecting the character of the President and his administration was recorded by him, in a letter to a friend, several weeks before his dismissal from the office of Secretary of the Treasury. "I consider the President," he wrote, "intoxicated with power and flattery. 'Constant dropping wears away stones.' Why, indeed, should we be surprised that he has bent under the influence of such passions as, in ancient and modern times, overcame men greater by nature and education than he is? It is the fact that men change that makes a republic preferable to a monarchy. Washington and Jefferson would not trust themselves with power longer than eight years. General Jackson was, at one time, so fearful of the influence of power and passion upon himself, that he was in favor of limiting service in the presidency to four years. But what a revolution do we behold! Now he is not only content to retain power for eight years, but desirous to transfer it to a favorite! Such is the effect of power and flattery! Are you amazed? I am not; the matter is easily explained. When he came into office, the President supposed that he would find much purity

at Washington, especially among his supporters, who had been making so many professions. Instead of that, he found the leaders at the head of factions, each desiring to drive the coach of state. He found his tables groaning under the weight of petitions for offices. He saw several of the late friends of his competitor, standing with cap in hand, to catch the falling crumbs. He heard adulation from every body ; plain truth from nobody. He came into office to be the friend of a whole people, but he became the mere purveyor for the hungry expectants of discordant factions. In short, all the circumstances around him were calculated to make him entertain an exalted opinion of himself, and a contemptuous one of others. His own natural passions contributed to this result. Such is my explanation—my apology, if you please. He is changed, or else we knew him not.”

Among the young men who surrounded General Jackson during the early years of his presidency, there was none who enjoyed more of his affection, and none who was more worthy of it, than Mr. Nicholas P. Trist, of Virginia, the husband of one of Mr. Jefferson’s grand-daughters. Mr. Trist was no politician in the partisan sense of the word, but a wise and able one in its true acceptation. He was also one of those happily constituted men who see clearly and lovingly the nobler traits of a friend, and are blind to the less worthy ones. In his intercourse with General Jackson, both as his friend and as his secretary, Mr. Trist saw him when his nature, so to speak, was in equilibrium ; when he was gentle, kind, winning, and just. The picture he has drawn of him is strictly true, but it does not convey all the truth ; for, as we have before remarked, Jackson in equilibrium and Jackson excited by passion, or biased by prejudice, were two very different beings.

Soon after Mr. Trist joined General Jackson’s family as his private secretary, he accompanied the General to the raptures of Virginia :

“One evening,” writes Mr. Trist, “after I parted with him for the

night, revolving over the directions he had given about some letters I was to prepare, one point occurred on which I was not perfectly satisfied as to what those directions had been. As the letters were to be sent off early next morning, I returned to his chamber door, and, tapping gently, in order not to wake him if he had got to sleep, my tap was answered by 'come in.'

"He was undressed, but not yet in bed, as I had supposed he must be by that time. He was sitting at the little table, with his wife's miniature—a very large one, then for the first time seen by me—before him, propped up against some books; and between him and the picture lay an open book, which bore the marks of long use.

"This book, as I afterward learned, was *her* prayer-book. The miniature he always wore next to his heart, suspended round his neck by a strong, black cord. The last thing he did every night, before lying down to rest, was to read in that book with that picture under his eyes.

"In Washington, on going one day into the President's office, I found that I had broken in upon a *tête-à-tête* between him and Charles, his negro driver. Charles was looking the culprit to his best, that is, as well as was permitted by a lurking smile, which betrayed his consciousness that nothing very terrible was coming. As I entered, the General was saying, 'Charles, you know *why* I value that carriage. This is the second time it has happened; and, if it ever happens again, I will send you back to Tennessee.'

"This lecture and threat Charles had brought upon himself by having left his coach-box, as the natural consequence of which the horses had run away and broken the carriage.

"In this scene I was struck with the fact that the General's thoughts and feelings dwelt upon the carriage, upon the injury sustained by it, without turning at all upon the expense of the injury to the horses, noble dapple grays, his favorite color, of his own rearing, and descendants of his famous horse Truxton. I at once inferred that this 'why' had reference to his wife; and upon inquiry of Col. Earl, my conjecture was verified. Because the carriage had been *hers*, it was better than any new one; it must never be given up, but always repaired and made as good as new, though the cost might be greater than that of a new one.

"There was more of the woman in his nature than in that of any man I ever knew—more of woman's tenderness toward children, and sympathy with them. Often has he been known, though he never had a child of his own, to walk up and down by the hour with an infant in his arms, because by so doing he relieved it from the cause of its crying; more also of woman's patience and uncomplaining, unnoticing submissiveness to trivial causes of irritation. There was in him a womanly modesty and



delicacy, as respects the relation of the sexes. Scipio was not more continent—more chaste would be the right word as to him—than I feel sure he was, in thought as well as in conduct. By no man was the homage due to woman, the only true homage she can receive—faith in her—more devoutly rendered. This chaste tenderness toward the sex was constantly manifesting itself, and in a manner so unstudied, so perfectly spontaneous, as to show that it was as natural to him as to breathe. As regards patience, I have often seen his temper tried to a degree that it irritated mine to think of, by those neglects in small things that go so hard with an invalid—as he always was at the period when I knew him—and which are so apt to test one's temper. But things of this kind passed off without so much as a shade coming over his countenance.

“Of course I do not mean to say that he was not subject to anger, and, at times, to the most vehement outbursts of passion. I have no doubt that he could be, and has been, a perfect volcano. Though I never witnessed any thing of the sort, there was that about him which told that he could be so, and confirmed what you heard of the fearfulness of his wrath. I speak of what he habitually was.

“This peculiar tenderness of nature entered largely, no doubt, into the composition of that *manner* of his with which so many have been struck, and which was of the highest available stamp, as regards both dignity and grace. Mr. Jefferson was strongly impressed with this on their meeting at Lynchburg—that meeting made memorable by the toast, ‘Honor to the man who has filled the measure of his country's glory.’ No better judge of manners lived than Jefferson, whose own were a charm to every one who approached him, and whose associations through life had been such that it must have been no easy matter for him to receive an impression of that kind. And yet, so strong had that impression been, that many years afterward—but the year before his death—upon being visited by an old friend whom he had known amidst the most polished circles of Paris, he dwelt upon this point as the most surprising thing about Jackson. How he could have got such manners—manners which, for their polish, no less than their dignity, would have attracted the attention of every one at any court in Europe—was to him an enigma. This was related to me, many years after Mr. Jefferson's death, by the gentleman referred to.

“Another of the numberless particulars of the undying fidelity—the truly feminine fidelity—of General Jackson's character manifesting itself in regard to his wife's memory, was the relation established by him toward Col. Earl, the portrait-painter. As a Nashville artist, Earl had been a *protégé* of Mrs. Jackson, one of the many objects on which the kindness of heart recorded in the epitaph—so different in truthfulness from most epitaphs—had found its indulgence. This was enough. By her death,

this relative became sanctified for the General's heart. Earl became forthwith *his protégé*. From that time forward the painter's home was under his roof, at Washington, in Tennessee, in the President's house, as at the Hermitage, where he died before the General. And this treatment was amply repaid. His devotion was more untiring even than his brush, and its steadiness would have proved itself, at any moment the opportunity might have offered, by his cheerfully laying down his life in his service. If he had had a thousand lives, they would, I feel sure, have been so laid down, one after the other, with the same perseverance that one canvas after another was lifted to his easel, there to keep its place till it had received 'the General.'

"Of the numberless cases which might be collected, corresponding to those above related of the impression made by his manner, I will mention one now, because of the idea it affords of him under another aspect, which was quite a common one with him, namely, a dry archness in administering a gentle rebuke when he thought it called for. One would expect something of the kind in his composition on being informed that, with him, the book of books—after the Bible, of course—was the 'Vicar of Wakefield.'

"The incident I am about to give occurred to Mr. Buchanan, by whom I have heard it related.

"An American lady—a daughter, I think, of Charles Carroll, of Carrollton—on her return from a residence in England, during which she had associated on the most familiar footing with the highest aristocracy of the island, among the rest, *the* 'Duke'—being desirous of seeing General Jackson, an hour was appointed for him to receive her. A few minutes before the time arrived, Mr. Buchanan, who knew of the arrangement, or perhaps was a party to it, upon going into the President's office found him there, immersed in work, and, very contrary to his wont, not at all neat in his dress and personal appearance; he had not even shaved, and had a slovenly look otherwise, which he had never before seen in him. Alarmed at the effect this might have upon the expected visitor, Mr. Buchanan ventured upon a hint to the effect that the hour being come, it would be advisable to engage in making preparations for the visit.

"'Mr. Buchanan,' observed the General, 'I once heard tell of a man in Tennessee, who got along very well in the world, and finally made a fortune, by minding his own business.' Saying which, he arose and left the room. In a very few minutes afterwards he walked into the parlor, to which Mr. Buchanan had repaired, presenting as neat an appearance in every respect as if he had passed hours at his toilet.

"The lady departed, expressing the same admiration of his manners that hundreds had experienced before her.

"Mr. Buchanan being upon the carpet, I will conclude with another incident which I have heard him relate more than once.

"The time this occurred was when the American settlers in Texas were known to be in full retreat, with Sam. Houston at their head, before Santa Aña and his advancing army. At that precise juncture, a breathless suspense prevailed throughout our country as to how the thing was to end; whether the Americans would make a stand, and try their hand at a fight whilst still in Texas, or run clear across the border, and thus get under the cover of that nationality of which they had divested themselves.

"At this critical moment, which soon after terminated in the news of the battle of San Jacinto, Mr. Buchanan called to see the President, whom he found in his office, with the map of Texas before him. He had been tracing the progress of Santa Aña (forwards,) and that of his pupil (backwards,) and did not seem at all elated at the spectacle presented by these movements. As Mr. Buchanan looked over the map, the General, putting his finger upon San Jacinto, said, 'Here is the place. If Sam Houston is worth one *bawbee*, he will make a stand here, and give them a fight.'

"A few days after, the news was received at Washington of what had taken place at that very spot."\*

To these pleasant recollections, contributed to the *Evening Post*, I can add others received in manuscript from Mr. Trist's own hand. Here is a little anecdote, recorded at the moment :

" 'I care nothing about clamors, sir, mark me! I do precisely what I think just and right.'

"The above are the precise words just uttered in my hearing, by Andrew Jackson; and as they convey a just idea of the man, so far as I have been able to penetrate him (and I have had the best opportunities) I have determined to commit them to paper while fresh in my mind. The occasion was this: Cabinet council on the 4th of May, 1833. (Present the Secretary of State, Livingston, of the Treasury, M'Lane, of War, Cass). The Maine boundary question was under consideration. Mr. Livingston had asked me for a rule, to draw some lines upon a map. After some minutes, search, I entered the President's office with a rule in my hand. The map was on the table before the President, Mr. Livingston was at his side, looking over the map with him, and making some remarks on the measure under consideration. He had just uttered the idea, that its adoption would probably raise a clamor, when the President interrupted him with the above words. As he uttered the last, his forefinger came down perpendicularly

\* New York *Evening Post*, July, 1853.

upon the map. To impress any one capable of reading man, with the real character of the 'Old Roman,' to have seen and heard him at this moment would have sufficed. All that I have seen of him (and I have seen him at all hours, and in every possible relation) is in perfect keeping with the above.

"N. P. TRIST.

"May 4th, 1838."

Mr. Trist gives the reader characteristic glimpses of the General in the following narratives :

"In the fall of 1836, on my arrival in Washington, *en route* for Virginia, I found General Jackson alone in the White House, with the exception of Colonel Earl, the other members of his household having left for Tennessee, and I was invited to remain with him until his departure for the Hermitage. I did so, and on one of the days of my stay I was his only companion in the afternoon walk, in which he was generally accompanied by Colonel Earl. Striking across the President's square in a north-west direction, and pursuing the same course towards Katorama, we came to a ravine into which our path descended, and as we crossed the rivulet at the bottom, some dilapidated houses stood before us on the brow of the hill. Those houses gave rise to the incident which I relate to you.

"A short time previously, during a visit of the General to the Rip Raps, at the mouth of Chesapeake Bay, for the benefit of sea air and bathing, some riots had occurred at Washington which had occasioned great alarm, especially among the colored population, against whom they were directed. The mob, as I learned, had manifested intense exasperation against, and had been very anxious to get hold of, a certain Augustus, a remarkably fine looking mulatto, who was one of the President's hired domestics, in the capacity of waiter on his office. As the story ran, Augustus had disappeared, and no trace of him could be found so long as the General was away; but the moment the latter had got back, there was Augustus also.

"As we crossed the rivulet, the General observed, 'Those are the houses which the mob destroyed,' adding a severe censure upon the city authorities for not having immediately suppressed the riots. He went on with the subject, mentioning that he had been waited upon by a deputation, to express the wish of those whom it represented, that Augustus should not be retained in the place he occupied (which proceeding was, of course, regarded by him as an approval of the mob's hunt after Augustus); and his reply had been to this effect: 'My servants are amenable to the law if they offend against the law, and if guilty of misconduct which the law does not take cognizance of, they are amenable to *me*. But, I would have all to understand distinctly that they are amenable to me *alone*, and

to no one else. They are entitled to protection at my hands, and this they shall receive.

"I observed that I had heard of all this, and was sorry to learn it, as I knew that the effect would be to make Augustus a fixture in the office.

" 'Why so, sir?' in a tone of some sharpness, showing that my remark had crossed the current of his feelings. I replied by saying that Augustus could read and write; that, from his hourly opportunities as regards papers and conversations, and even Cabinet discussions, every thing was at his mercy; and that, of course, among his (the General's) opponents there were some not above tampering with a domestic in such a position. 'They are welcome, sir, said he, to anything they can get out of my papers. They will find there, among other things, false grammar and bad spelling; but they are welcome to it all, grammar and spelling included. Let them make the most of it. Our government, sir, is founded upon the intelligence of the people; it has no other basis; upon their capacity to arrive at right conclusions in regard to measures and in regard to men; and I am not afraid of their failing to do so from any use that can be made of any thing that can be got out of my papers.'

"Of course, I made the objection that this view of the matter might do very well *if* the people could be put in possession of the *whole* truth; if they could be made fully and perfectly acquainted with a subject, in every particular and every circumstance pertinent to its merits. But this being impossible, while, on the other hand, mere fragments of truth often bear a complexion calculated to convey totally false impressions regarding the whole of which they constitute a part, such partial disclosures could not but be attended often with mischievous consequences. 'Well, if they can't know all, let them know as much as they can. The more they know of matters the better.'

"While writing the above I have been reminded of a remark made by Mr. Gallatin, at the beginning of General Jackson's administration. Speaking of Jefferson, he said that Jefferson's name had a power with the people—with the honest, unsophisticated masses—that no other name ever possessed—ever approached to. And it was because no man could come in contact with him—no man could really know him, without being penetrated with the truth that he was the sincerest and earnestest democrat living; the firmest and most unwavering in the democratic faith—in his confidence in the reliability of the people. 'This man,' added Gallatin, pointing toward the White House, 'has a popularity of the same sort. It seems to be no less strong than that of Jefferson, but he is the only one that can at all compare with Jefferson in this respect.'

"(Observe that this was said at the very beginning of Jackson's administration, and before his hold upon the confidence of the people had been put to a single one of the many severe tests which the future had in store

for it, and which proved the accuracy of Gallatin's insight into its nature.)

"In the treatment of the wounds received by Jackson in his encounter with the Bentons, a slug or fragment of ball was overlooked, which for years afterwards proved, on many occasions, the cause of an inflammation that threatened serious consequences. One of these occurred at Washington during the General's service in the Senate, and, in this instance, the alarm of his friends was greater than ever before. It was, also, far more extensively communicated, corresponding, in this respect, to the importance which his *life* had acquired, and the value now attaching to it under the party aspect. From these causes, the anxiety about it rose to the pitch of a wide spread consternation, and this had for its fruit an appeal to Mrs. Jackson, in the hope that through her influence the General might be prevailed upon to call in another physician. The case was in the hands of Dr. Sims, an old friend, who was always the family doctor when Jackson was at Washington. Mrs. Jackson having become thoroughly enlisted in the cause, the General's most intimate friends, knowing the tenderness of his devotion to her, and his invariable deference to her wishes, counted upon the result as certain. The entreaty was made by her, and to the amazement of all, it proved a failure. All she had to report to the confederates was an entreaty from him. He had replied to hers, "Dr. Sims is my friend—an old and valued friend. His professional reputation, his standing as a physician, his feelings as a man, as a friend, are all at stake in this matter. My dear, the thing is impossible; it can not be. *He* shall cure me, or he shall kill me. I entreat you never to speak to me again upon the subject."

"At a very early period of General Jackson's presidential service, and while he was still 'green in office,' I was with him one day on State Department business, and upon getting through with this, he said to me, 'Here is a paper which has been sent up from your department for my approval, with Mr. Brent's signature as Acting Secretary.' I replied with a smile (the smile of superior knowledge respecting official details, which *he* was not to be presumed to be acquainted with), 'He *is* Acting Secretary, the Secretary of State being absent from the city.' I had not been long in the department, but long enough to have become imbued with this belief, which prevailed there, and was habitually practiced upon. Its correctness *I* had 'taken for granted.' Not so the General. 'If you will look into the law, sir, you will see that the chief clerk is *ex officio* Acting Secretary, only in case of vacancy in the office, and not merely from the Secretary's being absent. Please inform Mr. Brent of this, and that he must be appointed Acting Secretary before he can validly act as such, under present circumstances.' Observe that Mr. Brent was an old gentleman (and a most estimable old gentleman he was) who had grown gray in the office then held by him.

“At a later period, Col. Aspinwall, our Consul at London, having sent in his account for certain expenses incurred by him for the defense of some American sailors who had been tried there on the charge of piracy, and this account being supported by proper vouchers, and there being no doubt of its correctness, the proper paper was sent up from the department for the General's signature—the President's approval of the disbursement being requisite in all cases of expenditure of the fund to which this one would be chargeable, if approved. Col. Aspinwall was held in great respect by General Jackson, to which he was richly entitled on every score, independently of the strong title to the General's favor of his having but one arm, in consequence of the other's having been left on the battle field in the war with England; in addition to all which he was known to be poor, with a family to be supported out of his very small salary. It could not, therefore, but be decidedly painful to the General to withhold from the Colonel any thing to which he was honestly entitled; and the honesty of this claim was a matter which, independently of the vouchers, the Colonel's character placed above doubt. Nevertheless, it was withheld, though, I believe, ultimately paid. Trivial as the amount was, instead of signing his name under ‘approved,’ without understanding the matter, (as some years afterward, in a memorable case relating to the same fund, and for an amount not trivial, happened to a President who had passed his life in all sorts of ‘civil’ employments), the General determined that he must thoroughly understand the matter before the requisite approval could be given. It was sent back to the department, with instructions to write to Col. Aspinwall, asking for explanations that would make the case fully understood. *Piracy*, he said, being a crime which necessarily denationalizes a man, inasmuch as it subjects him to the jurisdiction of any and every government, he doubted whether persons under indictment and trial for this crime, by the tribunals of a foreign State, could be regarded as retaining their national character, and consequently whether any expenditure on their behalf was lawful and proper.

“These two instances afford a correct idea of what the ‘military chieftain’ habitually was as respects those matters of official routine, about which the impression so generally prevailed that he could not but be altogether incompetent, and entirely dependent upon his subordinates.

“On one occasion, upon my going into the President's office (this was in the earlier part of nullification times), Major Donelson addressed a remark to me which led to a conversation about the nullification theory, and the Virginia State-rights doctrine of 1798, with which that theory claimed to be identical—my object in the conversation being to explain the Virginia doctrine, and show the absurdity of this pretension. I spoke in an under tone, that I might not disturb the General's cogitations, as he sat smoking his pipe, facing the fire-place, several yards distant from the



Major and myself. The dinner bell rang, and the General taking my arm as we descended the stairs said, 'Trist, beware of your metaphysics.' Until now, I supposed that he had not heard a word of what we had been saying. I replied, 'My metaphysics, as you call them, General, have been my salvation in this case. But for them, I should inevitably have been a nullifier, as several of my friends have become: for they have enabled me to see into the fallaciousness of the reasoning by which it is pretended to identify nullification with the Virginia doctrine. Had I not seen into this, I must inevitably have been a nullifier: for, to my mind, our doctrine is founded on reasoning which is unanswerable. It is the true theory of the constitution, and the only thing that can preserve us against consolidation.' 'No doubt of that,' said he, 'but still I say, beware of your metaphysics: there is no telling where they may lead and land you. Hair-splitting is dangerous business.' "

I am tempted to draw once more upon Mr. Trist's portfolio, although the narrative which tempts me does not relate to General Jackson's White House life. The story, however, was often told in the White House. It is incomparably the best illustration of General Jackson's force of character and strength of purpose that has ever seen the light of publication. Mr. Trist heard it related by Mr. Enoch Parsons, one of General Jackson's oldest Tennessee friends. He was so struck with the story that he induced Mr. Parsons to write it out, and from the original manuscript I transcribe it here. Mr. Parsons was a member of the legislature of Tennessee when the news reached that State of the dread massacre at Fort Mims, and General Jackson lay helpless in bed, slowly recovering from the wounds he had received in the affray with the Bentons:

"I arrived at Nashville," wrote Mr. Parsons, "on the Saturday before the third Monday in September, 1813. I found in the public square a very large crowd of people, and many fine speeches were making to the people, and the talking part of a war was never better performed. I was invited out to the place where the orators were holding forth, and invited to address the people. I declined the distinction; the talking ended; and resolutions were adopted, the substance of which was that the enlightened legislature would convene on the next Monday, and they would prepare for the emergency.

"The legislature was composed of twenty senators and forty repre-



sentatives, some of them old, infirm men. As soon as the Houses were organized, at my table I wrote a bill, and introduced it, to call out 3,500 men, under the General entitled to command, and place them in the Indian nation, so that they might preserve the Mississippi territory from destruction, and prevent the friendly Indians from taking the enemy's side, and to render service to the United States until the United States could provide a force. The bill pledged all the revenue of the State for one hundred years to pay the expense, and authorized the Governor to borrow money from any source he could, and at the lowest rate he could, to defray the expenses of the campaign. The Secretary of State, William G. Blount, Major John Russell, a senator, and myself signed or endorsed the Governor's note for twenty thousand dollars, and the old patriotic State Bank lent the money which the note called for.

"At this time General Jackson was lying, as he had been between ten and twenty days, with the wounds received in the battle with the Bentons and others, and had not been out of his room, if out of his bed. The constitution of the State would not allow the bill to become a law until it had passed in each house three times on different days. The bill was, therefore, passed in each house on Monday, and lay in the Senate for Tuesday.

"After the adjournment of the Houses on Monday, as I passed out of the Senate chamber, I was accosted by a gentleman, and presented with General Jackson's compliments and a request that I should see him forthwith. I had not been to his room since my arrival. I complied with his request, and found he was minutely informed of the contents of the bill I had introduced, and wished to know if it would pass, and said that the news of the introduction of the bill had spread all over the city, and that it was called the War Bill or Parsons' Bill. I assured the General it would pass, and on Wednesday would be a law, and I mentioned that I regretted very much that the General entitled to command, and who all would desire should command the forces of the State, was not in a condition to take the field. To which General Jackson replied:

" 'The devil in hell, he is not.'

"He gritted his teeth with anguish as he uttered these words, and groaned when he ceased to speak. I told him that I hoped I was mistaken, but that I did not believe he could just then take the field. After some time I left the General. Two hours after, I received fifty or more copies of his orders, which had been made out and printed in the mean time, and ordered the troops to rendezvous at Fayetteville, eighty miles on the way, on Thursday. At the bottom of the order was a note, stating that the health of the commanding general was *restored*.

"That evening or the next day, I saw Dr. May, General Jackson's principal physician, and inquired of him if he thought General Jackson

could possibly march, Dr. May said that no other man could, and that it was uncertain whether, with his spunk and energy, *he* could; but that it was entirely uncertain what General Jackson could do in such circumstances.

"I felt much anxiety for the country and for the General; and when the General started, which was, I think, on the day before the law passed, Dr. May went with him and returned in three or four days. I called on Dr. May, upon his return, and enquired, how the General had got along. Whereupon the Doctor stated, that they had *to stop the General frequently, and wash him from head to foot in solutions of sugar of lead to keep down inflammation*; and that he was better, and he and his troops had gone on! The legislature then prefixed a supplemental bill to suspend all actions in which the volunteers were concerned in the courts until their return. These statutes may be seen by looking into the laws of Tennessee of 1813, and which I conceive were the right kind of laws. The troops were taken into the service of the United States, and with them General Jackson fought the first three Indian battles."

There, reader, you have ANDREW JACKSON—his real secret, the explanation of his character, of his success, of his celebrity. If any one inquires of you what manner of man Andrew Jackson was, answer him by telling Mr. Parsons' story.

Mr. Trist informs me, that, during his residence in the White House, he frequently saw the President exhibit the same utter defiance of bodily anguish. He would transact business with calmness and precision, when he was suffering the acutest pain, and when he was so pitiably feeble that signing his name threw him into a perspiration. He could not be kept from work; nor was it of any benefit to him if he did abstain; for, says Mr. Trist, if he did not work with his hands, he wore himself out with thinking.

Mr. John Van Buren, who was a very young man during General Jackson's administration, has only agreeable recollections of the President. All dependents and inferiors, he remarks, loved him—boys, clerks, women, and servants, as well as horses and dogs. "He was an open-air man," who had no secrets and locked nothing up. "While the fight lasted there was no tiring him out;" when the feud was at an end, he would not permit the most distant reference to it in his pres-

ence. The tie between General Jackson and his successor was one of the sincerest mutual affection and respect ; each finding in the other admirable qualities wanting in himself. In the White House, as everywhere, General Jackson was the MASTER—every one's master. He could be influenced, advised and persuaded ; but there were times when no man could move him a hair's breadth, when every man had to yield to his will, or stand aside.

Upon no one did General Jackson make an impression so deep or so lasting as upon Mr. Francis P. Blair, the editor of the *Globe*. A man naturally thinks well of one to whom he owes deliverance, fortune, power, and fame. But twenty years have passed since Mr. Blair ceased to be the recipient of benefits conferred through General Jackson. He has had leisure to reflect upon the scenes through which he passed during the General's administration. And if gratitude blinds our eyes to the faults of a friend, it may also be most truly said, that no man can rightly judge another who does not in some degree sympathize with him. The judgments dictated or biased by hatred, or by antipathy, are false necessarily. Love is the enlightener of the human soul. Its judgments are the only ones that approach correctness ; for the good in a man is the *man* ; the bad in him is temporary, accidental, and occasional. At least, I like to think so.

Mr. Blair's opinion of General Jackson—as expressed in conversation—I confess, fills me with astonishment. He deliberately concurs in Colbert's judgment, that Andrew Jackson was the greatest man that ever lived. The bravest of the brave ; the wisest of the wise ; the most tender, the most resolute, the most discreet, and the most eloquent of human beings. Fighting men loved him for his valor, and cowards loved him for the protection he gave them. No man, and no combination of men, could ever overcome him ; he was victorious on every field. Clay, Webster, Calhoun, Preston, Biddle, the bank, the capitalists—the brightest men and the most powerful agencies—were leagued against him for eight years, without gaining over him one important advan-

tage. He attempted nothing which he did not accomplish, (*except* compelling the ladies of Washington to associate with Mrs. Eaton). He gained constantly in Congress, and left his party in a majority in both Houses. His eloquence surpassed that of the most renowned orators. When he grew warm in conversation, and his gray bristles shook, he thrilled the listeners' nerves and souls, as no other man could thrill them. No man could resist the impetuous intensity of his speech. He was a man of absolute sincerity, incapable of guile, or artifice, or acting for effect. He loved the people with a deep, exhaustless love; believed in them; would have laid down his hoary head on the block for them, and counted it gain and glory. He was the controlling soul of his administration at every moment of its existence. He was the animating spirit of the *Globe* newspaper, the author of the best editorial suggestions, the inspirer of its most successful articles. He transferred the mantle of power to Mr. Van Buren for reasons that were wise and patriotic; because he knew that, of all the public men then living, Martin Van Buren was the most certain to adhere to the simple policy marked out by Jefferson, and to continue the war against monopolies and a loose construction of the constitution. Mr. Van Buren was no intriguer. It was the terror of his public life to be thought one. When the *Globe* was in the plenitude of its power, when politicians trembled at its frown, and stood cap in hand before it, Mr. Van Buren, neither by word nor manner nor management, ever made the slightest attempt to conciliate its favor. He never made one suggestion respecting its course or its contents. His demeanor to the editor, in their daily intercourse, was the same precisely when the opposition of the *Globe* might have kept him out of the presidency, as it had been when the paper was struggling into existence without a dozen subscribers. General Jackson's choice of a successor was among the wisest of his acts.

To these opinions, sincerely held by Mr. Blair, I will add one anecdote related by him, tending to show that, dearly as General Jackson loved a horse, he loved his friend better.

Three young horses, descended from the great Truxton, were brought from the Hermitage to Washington. On a beautiful spring day they were to be tried upon a race-course near the city. Early in the morning of that day, Mr. Blair had occasion to visit the President's office, where he found Major Donelson, booted and spurred, just about to mount and ride away to the race-course to see what the young horses could do.

"Come with us, Blair," said Major Donelson, "it's a fine day, and you'll enjoy it."

"No," said Mr. Blair, "I can't go to-day. Besides, I've no horse."

"Well, get one from a livery stable."

"Not to-day, Major."

"The President, who was in the room, busy over some papers, cried out :

"Why, Mr. Blair, take my horse. Donelson, order my horse for Mr. Blair."

The Secretary hesitated, looked confused, and at last stammered out :

"Well, Blair, come on, then."

They walked out together, and on getting to the bottom of the steps, found the General's well known horse already saddled and bridled.

"Why, the General is going himself, then !" exclaimed Mr. Blair.

"He was going," said the Major, sorrowfully, "but he won't go now."

"But let us go back and persuade him."

"It will be of no use," said Major Donelson. "He had set his heart upon seeing those colts run to-day. But he has now set his heart upon *your* going. I know him, Blair. It will only offend him if we say another word about it. He has made up his mind that you shall go, and that he will not. So, mount."

The editorship of the *Globe* and the congressional printing were important to Mr. Blair ; but it was such acts as these

that won his heart. He tells you calmly that General Jackson made his fortune. When he relates stories like this, his voice falters and his eyes moisten.

A lady, who was constantly at the White House during the early part of General Jackson's administration, describes the evening scene in the President's own parlor. She desires to see it painted, and suggests the subject to artists. A large parlor, scantily furnished, lighted from above by a chandelier ; a bright, blazing fire in the grate ; around the fire four or five ladies sewing, say Mrs. Donelson, Mrs. Andrew Jackson, Mrs. Edward Livingston, and another or two ; five or six children, from two to seven years of age, playing about the room, too regardless of documents and work-baskets. At a distant end of the apartment the President, seated in an arm-chair, wearing a long, loose coat, smoking a long, reed pipe, with a red clay bowl, exhibiting the combined dignity of a patriarch, a monarch, and an Indian chief. A little behind the President, Edward Livingston, Secretary of State, reading to him, in a low tone, a dispatch from the French Minister for Foreign Affairs. The President listens intently, yet with a certain bland assurance, as though he were saying to himself, " Say you so, Monsieur ? We shall see about that." The ladies glance toward him, now and then, with fond admiration expressed in their countenances. The children are too loud occasionally in their play. The President inclines his ear closer to the Secretary, and waves his pipe, absently, but with an exquisite smiling tenderness, toward the noisy group, which, Mrs. Donelson perceiving, she lifts her finger and whispers admonition.

## CHAPTER XLIII.

## CLOSE OF THE ADMINISTRATION.

MR. VAN BUREN had been elected to succeed General Jackson. The administration commanded a majority in both Houses. Mr. Polk, a strenuous and unscrupulous partisan, was speaker of the House of Representatives. The impending session of Congress was the "short" session. The opposition was disheartened, and the President's popularity was undiminished. In these circumstances it would have been reasonable to expect that the last few months of General Jackson's tenure of power would exhibit a lull in the fierce contentions which for eight years had distracted the country.

Those who indulged an expectation of that nature, if any such there were, were disappointed ; for strife, acrimony, violence, vituperation, were as much the order of the day at Washington, during this last session of Congress, as they had been during the panic session itself.

The last annual message of General Jackson, remarkable in many respects, differs in one particular from all other papers, public or private, that bear his signature. It announced that Andrew Jackson had changed his mind ! The expansion of the business of the country had become alarming. The receipts of the treasury had reached the astounding sum of nearly forty-eight millions of dollars, of which no less than twenty-four millions had accrued from the sale of the public lands ; and the balance in the treasury would amount, on the first of January, to little less than forty-two millions. It was this terrible surplus that had awakened the President's apprehensions, and caused a revision of his opinions. He was opposed to any policy which contemplated a surplus, and regretted the passage of the deposit act, to which he had given "a reluctant assent."

The distribution of the surplus among the States, he

said, had already produced effects that threatened disaster, and Congress was accordingly advised to act at once upon the principle of collecting no more revenue than the wants of the government required.

The message proceeded to justify the specie circular, to commend the working of the State-bank system, and to condemn the United States Bank of Pennsylvania for continuing in circulation the notes of the extinct United States Bank.

For the eighth time the President repeated his recommendation with regard to the election of President and Vice-President. He complimented highly the government employés, through whose "integrity and ability" he was enabled to leave the various executive departments in "a prosperous condition."

During the first week of the session, Col. Benton made known to the Senate his intention to force to a decisive vote his proposal to expunge from the journal Mr. Clay's resolution of 1834, which censured the President for removing Mr. Duane and the deposits. For nearly three years the persistent Benton had been agitating this notable scheme, and with so much effect that the legislatures of several States, New York among the number, had instructed their Senators to vote for the expunging. It was made a party measure. In vain did the opposition contend that the constitution required the Senate to KEEP a record of its proceedings. How, asked Mr. Webster, can we be said to *keep* a record, if any part of it is expunged? Col. Benton replied to all arguments by delivering eulogiums upon the character and administration of General Jackson, so fervid, so eloquent, so admirably expressed, that, to this day, whoever reads them forgets, for the moment, every thing in the public conduct of General Jackson that was not wise, noble, and heroic. In the warmth of his enthusiasm he forgot his fears of the coming crash, which he was accustomed to predict. All Europe, he said, beheld with admiration the *success* of our efforts to supply ourselves with gold and silver, the blessed currency of the



constitution. Seventy-five millions of specie in the country "are the *security* of the people against the dangers of a depreciated and inconvertible paper money!" He pronounced the administration of General Jackson to be as "brilliant, beneficent, and glorious," as his military life had been "resplendent with dazzling events." "Solitary and alone," said the orator in conclusion, "and amid the jeers and taunts of my opponents, I put this ball in motion. The people have taken it up, and rolled it forward, and I am no longer any thing but a unit in the vast mass which now propels it."

Monday, the 16th of January, was the day upon which the great deed was done. Col. Benton tells us, that "expecting a protracted session, extending through the day and night, and knowing the difficulty of keeping men steady to their work and in good humor, when tired and hungry, the mover of the proceeding took care to provide, as far as possible, against such a state of things; and gave orders that night to have an ample supply of cold hams, turkeys, rounds of beef, pickles, wines, and cups of hot coffee, ready in a certain committee room near the Senate chamber by four o'clock on the afternoon of Monday."

It was a wise precaution, for the debate was protracted until midnight. After a debate of nearly thirteen consecutive hours, members of the opposition came round to Col. Benton's desk, and said: "This question has degenerated into a trial of nerves and muscles. It has become a question of physical endurance; and we see no use in wearing ourselves out to keep off for a few hours longer what has to come before we separate. We see that you are able and determined to carry your measures: so call the vote as soon as you please. We shall say no more." Mr. Webster was the last speaker, and when he sat down there was a dead silence, which was broken at last by the single word, "Question." The yeas and nays were ordered, and the resolution to expunge was carried by a vote of twenty-five to nineteen. Thereupon, the Secretary of the Senate "produced the original manuscript journal of the Senate, and opening at the page which con-

tained the condemnatory sentence of March 28th, 1834, proceeded in open Senate to draw a square of broad black lines around the sentence, and to write across its face in strong letters these words: 'Expunged by order of the Senate, this 16th day of March, 1837.'"

At once a storm of hisses, groans and outcries burst from the crowded galleries; which were silenced only when the apparent ringleader was seized and dragged to the bar of the chamber. "The gratification of General Jackson," adds Benton, "was extreme. He gave a grand dinner to the expungers (as they were called) and their wives; and being too weak to sit at the table, he only met the company, placed the 'head-expunger' in his chair, and withdrew to his sick chamber. That expurgation! it was the 'crowning mercy' of his civil, as New Orleans had been of his military life!"

The only result of this nonsensical affair was to fix it in the memory of the American people, that, in the year 1834, the Senate of the United States passed a vote of censure upon one of the acts of President Jackson. The page of the journal which Col. Benton caused to be disfigured in the manner which he so exultingly describes will long continue to be shown to inquisitive visitors as one of the curiosities of the capitol.

Violent scenes were passing, meanwhile, at the other end of the capitol. The passage of the message in which the President paid a parting compliment to the employés of the departments, was actually made the pretext for an investigation into the conduct of the gentlemen complimented. On motion of Mr. Henry A. Wise of Virginia, the passage was referred to a special committee, who proceeded to examine witnesses, and, among others, the notorious Reuben M. Whitney. The conduct of this witness, according to the statement of Mr. Wise, was "supercilious, self-important, contumacious, and contemptuous." Many questions he refused to answer; others he would answer only in writing; to none was his reply satisfactory. "He would write his answer," said Mr. Wise, "at the table, and, then, with an im-

puident air of nonchalance, would fold his arms, cock up his legs against the wall, and cast glances full of defiance and expressive of contempt at me and my friend, Mr. Bailie Peyton, of Tennessee." Conduct like this led, at last, to a collision between Mr. Peyton and the witness ; of a violent but bloodless character, in which Mr. Wise bore an energetic part.

During the last month of his presidency, General Jackson came into collision again with his old enemy, Mr. Calhoun. In the course of a speech, Mr. Calhoun had remarked upon the land speculations in which almost every man in the country who had capital or credit was then engaged. A sentence or two of his speech, as reported in the *Globe*, gave the impression that the President himself was concerned in land speculations. In a long letter, of a remarkably respectful and moderate character, the President demanded a prosecution of the charge. "If you will neither do justice yourself," said he, "nor place the matter in a position where justice may be done me by the representatives of the people, I shall be compelled to resort to the only remedy left me, and before I leave the city, give publicity to this letter, by which you will stand stigmatized as one who, protected by his constitutional privilege, is ready to stab the reputation of others, without the magnanimity to do them justice."

With this letter were enclosed two notes certifying to the correctness of the *Globe's* report : one from a spectator in the gallery of the Senate chamber, and one from the short-hand writer who reported the speech.

Mr. Calhoun spared the President the necessity of giving publicity to his letter. The morning after he had received it, the Senator from South Carolina informed the Senate, that he had received from the President of the United States a communication of such a nature that he felt it his duty to cause it to be read to them, and he handed it to the clerk for that purpose. After it had been read, Mr. Calhoun proceeded to comment upon it. "It has excited in my bosom," said the Senator, "but one feeling, that of pity for the weakness of its author, contempt for his menace, and humiliation that

one occupying the office which he does, should place himself in a situation so unworthy of his exalted station. Nor do I intend to invoke the interposition of the Senate to protect the privilege attached to a Senator from one of the sovereign States of this confederation, which has been outraged in my person."

Mr. Calhoun proceeded to recapitulate his previous speech, and denied that he had used the language attributed to him by the reporter. Two Senators testified to the correctness of Mr. Calhoun's recapitulation. Mr. Calhoun then concluded his remarks by observing, that he was "gratified by this testimony, and that all might now see, from these statements, and the acquiescence of other Senators, what little cause the President had for the outrage upon his privilege, and that of the Senate, and for applying language to him which is never used in intercourse between gentlemen, and better suited to the purlieus of Billingsgate than to the mansion of the Chief Magistrate."\*

The President took no further notice of the affair, nor did the Senate take any action upon it.

Signs of coming revulsion in the world of business were so numerous and so palpable, during this session, that it is wonderful so few observed them. The short crops of 1836 and the paper inflation had raised the price of the necessaries of life to a point they had never reached before, and have never reached since. Flour was sold in lots, at fifteen dollars a barrel; in single barrels, at sixteen; in smaller quantities, at eighteen. The growing scarcity of money had already compelled manufacturers to dismiss many of their workmen; and, thus, at a moment, when financiers cherished the delusion that the country was prosperous beyond all previous example, large numbers of worthy mechanics and seamstresses were suffering from downright want. It was during this winter of delirium and distress, that some vile demagogue in the city of New York, promulgated from the steps of the City Hall, the lie that the high price of flour was caused by spec-

\* Calhoun's Works, Vol. III. p. 1 to 9.

ulators, whose stores were said to be filled with flour, kept from the market in the expectation of its realizing a famine price. A mob of infuriated men, foreigners most of them, surrounded a great flour store in the lower part of the city, battered down the doors, rolled the barrels into the street, and destroyed or carried off their contents. For two or three days the city was kept in groundless terror of a general uprising of the distressed workingmen, and a general spoliation of the provision stores.

Business men were gasping all the winter for breath, but scarcely a man of them believed that the pressure was any thing but temporary and accidental. After a day of extraordinary stringency, the newspapers, in one chorus, would declare that then the worst was over; the bottom had been touched; relief was at hand. Col. Benton, who had so extolled the state of the currency in January, tells us that, in February, he knew that the grand crash was both inevitable and near. "It was in the month of February," says he, "that I invited the president-elect into a committee room, and stated to him my opinion that we were on the eve of an explosion of the paper system and of a general suspension of the banks—intending to follow up that expression of opinion with the exposition of my reasons for thinking so; but the interview came to a sudden and unexpected termination. Hardly had I expressed my belief of this impending catastrophe than he spoke up and said, 'Your friends think you a little exalted in the head on that subject.' I said no more. I was miffed. We left the room together, talking on different matters, and I saying to myself, '*You will soon feel the thunderbolt.*' "

The last public act of President Jackson, done as the last hour of the third of March was expiring, illustrates his firmness, his audacity, and his tact.

The specie circular of July, 1836, was the ruling topic of debate in both Houses during the greater part of the session. It revived, as might have been foreseen, all the currency and bank questions which for so many years had stirred the pas-

sions of both political parties. Presuming that the reader has had enough of these heated and fruitless discussions, I will only state that, after a long and acrimonious debate, the specie circular was rescinded by great majorities. Mr. Calhoun refused to vote upon the rescinding bill, though he was in favor of it. The currency, he declared, was in a state of disorder so inextricable that nothing short of the crash and ruin which he felt to be impending could render its rectification possible.

But the specie circular was more than rescinded. The rescinding bill contained various provisions, the effect of which was to *render bank notes, under certain restrictions, a legal tender*. There is reason to believe that the astonishing majorities which passed this measure were largely composed of members who were themselves deeply involved in the very speculations which the specie circular was designed to prevent. General Jackson, as I learn from one of his letters to Mr. Trist, was puzzled and amazed at the conduct of his friends on this occasion :

GENERAL JACKSON TO NICHOLAS P. TRIST.

“ WASHINGTON, March 2d, 1837.

“ MY DEAR MR. TRIST: Your letter of Friday evening, Nov. 4th, 1836, found me confined to my room, indeed, I might say to my bed, and I have been only four times down stairs since the 15th of November last, although I have been obliged to labor incessantly, and now within one day of the close of the session engaged in preparing another veto message to a bill from the Senate, and, I may add, fostered by some of my friends and all the opposition, which, I trust, will be my excuse for not answering your letter sooner. I have often heard from you and your amiable family, was happy to learn you were all enjoying good health, and may that greatest of all blessings, good health, continue with you all until the end of long life, and then a happy immortality.

“ The papers will give you the proceedings of Congress. I here inclose you the proof-sheets of my farewell address to my fellow-citizens of these United States. There will be some verbal amendments in the phraseology, but none in the substance or principle.

“ As I will always be happy to hear from you, and as I will leave here on the 6th, I will be happy to receive a letter from you at the Hermitage,

and when you visit the United States, I will be happy to see you and your family there, where I promise you a hearty welcome.

"To-morrow ends my official career for ever. On the 4th, I hope to be able to go to the capitol to witness the glorious scene of Mr. Van Buren—once rejected by the Senate—sworn into office by Chief Justice Taney, also being rejected by the factious Senate. This shows the power of public opinion, and thus, unless corrupted by a paper, banking, and gambling system, of which, from the symptoms displayed in the Senate, I have some fear, our republic will for ever endure.

"I am free to declare that the votes of some of our friends in the Senate, are perfectly unaccountable to me on this paper system. Good professed State-rights men, and professed hard money men—the constitutional currency—still they vote to pass a bill to make bank bills part of our currency.

"But I must close. I am too weak to copy this if I had time. With my kind salutations to you, and to all your family, I remain your friend,

“ANDREW JACKSON.

“N. P. TRIST, Esq., Consul, Havana.”

The General, in this letter, speaks of vetoing the bill. He changed his intention, however, as the bill could have been passed over his veto. He killed the measure by not acting upon it. The following is the last paper to which General Jackson affixed his signature as President of the United States :

“REASONS OF PRESIDENT JACKSON FOR NOT ACTING DEFINITELY ON THE BILL ENTITLED ‘AN ACT DESIGNATING AND LIMITING THE FUNDS RECEIVABLE FOR THE REVENUES OF THE UNITED STATES.’

“The bill from the Senate, entitled ‘An act designating and limiting the funds receivable for the revenues of the United States,’ came to my hands yesterday, at 2 o’clock, P. M. On perusing it, I found its provisions so complex and uncertain that I deemed it necessary to obtain the opinion of the Attorney General of the United States on several important questions touching its construction and effect, before I could decide on the disposition to be made of it. The Attorney General took up the subject immediately, and his reply was reported to me this day, at five o’clock, P. M. As this officer, after a careful and laborious examination of the bill, and a distinct expression of his opinion on the points proposed to him, still came to the conclusion that the construction of the bill, should it become a law, would be yet a subject of much perplexity and doubt (a view of the bill entirely coincident with my own), and as I can not think it proper, in a matter of such interest and of such constant application, to

approve a bill so liable to diversity of interpretations, and more especially as I have not had time, amid the duties constantly pressing upon me, to give the subject that deliberate consideration which its importance demands, I am constrained to retain the bill, without acting definitely thereon; and to the end that my reasons for this step may be fully understood, I shall cause this paper, with the opinion of the Attorney General, and the bill in question, to be deposited in the Department of State."

"ANDREW JACKSON.

"WASHINGTON, March 3, 1837—one quarter before twelve, P. M."

To the last day of his residence in the presidential mansion, General Jackson continued to receive proofs that he was still the idol of the people. The eloquence of the opposition had not availed to lessen his general popularity in the least degree. We read of one enthusiastic Jacksonian conveying to Washington, from New York, with banners and bands of music, a prodigious cheese, as a present to the retiring chief. The cheese was four feet in diameter, two feet thick, and weighed fourteen hundred pounds—twice as large, said the *Globe*, as the great cheese given to Mr. Jefferson on a similar occasion. The President, after giving away large masses of his cheese to his friends, found that he had still more cheese than he could consume. At his last public reception he caused a piece of the cheese to be presented to all who chose to receive one, an operation that filled the White House with an odor that is pleasant only when there is not too much of it. Another ardent lover of the President gave him a light wagon composed entirely of hickory sticks, with the bark upon them. Another presented an elegant phaeton, made of the wood of the old frigate *Constitution*. The hickory wagon the General left in Washington, as a memento to his successor. The constitutional phaeton he took with him to the Hermitage, where I saw it, faded and dilapidated, in 1858.

The farewell address of the retiring President was little more than a resumé of the doctrines of his eight annual messages. The priceless value of the Union; the danger to it of sectional agitation; the evils of a splendid and powerful



government ; the safety and advantages of plain and inexpensive institutions ; the perils of a surplus revenue ; the injustice of a high tariff ; the unconstitutionality of that system of internal improvements which the Maysville veto had checked ; the curse of paper money ; the extreme desirableness of a currency of gold and silver, were the leading topics upon which the President descanted. " My own race," said he, " is nearly run ; advanced age and failing health warn me that before long I must pass beyond the reach of human events, and cease to feel the vicissitudes of human affairs. I thank God that my life has been spent in a land of liberty, and that he has given me a heart to love my country with the affection of a son. And filled with gratitude for your constant and unwavering kindness, I bid you a last and affectionate farewell."

This farewell address provoked from the opposition a comparison with another document bearing the same title. It was presumption, they said, in the President to suppose that there was any thing in his character, or in his relation to the people, which justified an imitation of a paper that ought to remain for ever unique. The *New York American* concluded its comments upon the address with these words : " Happily it is the last humbug which the mischievous popularity of this illiterate, violent, vain, and iron-willed soldier can impose upon a confiding and credulous people."

As an instructive contrast to this bitter sentence, consider the following lines, written about the same time, by John Lawson, an inhabitant of the same city, and upon the same subject :

" ANDREW JACKSON.

Come, stand the nearest to thy country's sire,  
 Thou fearless man of uncorrupted heart,  
 Well worthy undivided praise thou art,  
 And 'twill be thine when slumbers party ire.  
 Raised by the voice of freemen to a height  
 Sublimar far than kings by birth may claim,  
 Thy stern, unselfish spirit dared the right,

And battled 'gainst the wrong. Thy holiest aim  
Was freedom in the largest sense, despite  
Misconstrued motives and unmeasured blame.  
Above deceit, in purpose firm and pure,  
Just to opposers and to friends sincere,  
Thy worth shall with thy country's name endure,  
And greener grow thy fame through every coming year."

The sun shone brilliantly on the fourth of March, the day of Mr. Van Buren's inauguration. The scene at the Capitol, to which the General had fondly looked forward for many a day, was described at the time by Mr. N. P. Willis with his own felicity :

"The republican procession, consisting of the Presidents and their families, escorted by a small volunteer corps, arrived soon after twelve. The General and Mr. Van Buren were in the 'constitution phaeton,' drawn by four grays, and as it entered the gate, they both rode uncovered. Descending from the carriage at the foot of the steps, a passage was made for them through the dense crowd, and the tall white head of the old Chieftain, still uncovered, went steadily up through the agitated mass, marked by its peculiarity from all around it. . . . The crowd of diplomatists and senators in the rear of the columns made way, and the ex-President and Mr. Van Buren advanced with uncovered heads. A murmur of feeling rose up from the moving mass below, and the infirm old man, emerged from a sick-chamber, which his physician had thought it impossible he should leave, bowed to the people, and, still uncovered in the cold air, took his seat beneath the portico. Mr. Van Buren then advanced, and with a voice remarkably distinct, and with great dignity, read his address to the people. The air was elastic, and the day still; and it is supposed that near twenty thousand persons heard him from his elevated position distinctly. I stood myself on the outer limit of the crowd, and though I lost occasionally a sentence from the interruption near by, his words came clearly articulated to my ear."

In his inaugural address Mr. Van Buren alluded to his predecessor in becoming terms. "In receiving from the people," he said, "the sacred trust twice confided to my illustrious predecessor, and which he has discharged so faithfully and so well, I know that I can not expect to perform the arduous task with equal ability and success. But, united as I have been in his counsels, a daily witness of his exclusive

and unsurpassed devotion to his country's welfare, agreeing with him in sentiments which his countrymen have warmly supported, and permitted to partake largely of his confidence, I may hope that somewhat of the same cheering approbation will be found to attend upon my path. For him, I but express with my own, the wishes of all—that he may yet long live to enjoy the brilliant evening of his well-spent life.”

General Jackson began his homeward journey on the third day after Mr. Van Buren's inauguration. “I saw,” says Benton, “the patriot ex-President in the car which bore him off to his desired seclusion. I saw him depart with that look of quiet enjoyment which bespoke the inward satisfaction of the soul at exchanging the cares of office for the repose of home.”

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## CHAPTER XLIV.

### IN RETIREMENT.

By easy stages, stopping often and long to rest, the ex-President traveled homeward. He visited Chief Justice Taney at his seat in Maryland. At Cincinnati he remained for two weeks, the guest of General Robert Lytle, a democratic member of Congress. He is said to have conversed on his journey home, with extraordinary freedom upon political subjects and persons. It appears to rest upon good testimony that, during his stay at Cincinnati, he expressed regret at having become estranged from Henry Clay. Clay and himself, he said, ought to have been friends, and would have been, but for the slander and cowardice of an individual whom he denominated “that Pennsylvania reptile,” and whom he said he would have “crushed,” if friends had not interceded in his behalf.\*

His friends at Nashville gave him an impressive and hearty

\* N. Y. *Evening Post*, March 21st, 1859. Communication.

welcome home, as they had been wont to do for many years as often as he returned after an absence. A young gentleman who took a leading part in the proceedings on this occasion has recorded his recollections of the scene: "The day of his return was to me one of the most memorable of my existence. We met him in the cedars near Lebanon. The old men were ranged in front, the boys in the rear. He got out of his carriage, listened courteously to the address of Judge Campbell, replied happily, and shook hands with his old associates. He then drew near to us. I stepped forward, spoke a few words of kindness, and wound up by saying, 'That the children of his old soldiers and friends welcomed him home, and were ready to serve under his banner.' His frame shook, he bowed down his head and whilst the tears rolled down his aged cheeks, he replied, 'I could have stood all but this, it is too much, too much !' The crowd gathered around, and for a few moments there was a general outburst of sympathy and tears. I may live a hundred years, but no future can erase that scene from my memory."\*

General Jackson was seventy years of age when he retired from the presidency. He was a very infirm old man, seldom free from pain for an hour, never for a day. Possessed of a most beautiful and productive farm and a hundred and fifty negroes, he yet felt himself to be a poor man on his return to the Hermitage. "I returned home," he writes to Mr. Trist, "with just ninety dollars in money, having expended all my salary, and most of the proceeds of my cotton crop; found every thing out of repair; corn, and every thing else for the use of my farm to buy; having but one tract of land besides my homestead, which I have sold, and which has enabled me to begin the new year (1838,) clear of debt, relying on our industry and economy to yield us a support, trusting to a kind Providence for good seasons, and a prosperous crop."

During the next few years, he lived the life of a planter, carefully directing the operations of his farm, enjoying the

\* Oration by Hon. Andrew Ewing, delivered at the inauguration of a bust of General Jackson, at Memphis, Tennessee, January 8th, 1859.

society of his adopted son, and his amiable and estimable wife. They and their children were the solace of his old age. Major Donelson and his family were near at hand, and often cheered him by their presence at the Hermitage. Surrounded by a large and affectionate circle, he passed many happy days ; and most of his latter days would have been happy if he had not been frequently reduced by sickness to the condition of a helpless invalid. His early tastes remained with him. He still took the keenest delight in a flourishing cotton field, and loved a fine horse as much as he did when he brought home Truxton from Virginia thirty years before. Mr. Milburn, in his "Ten Years of Preacher Life," gives us a momentary glimpse of the General in these tranquil years, which shows us how he exulted in the mere sight of a superior horse. "The only time," says Mr. Milburn, "I ever saw Andrew Jackson, was early on a bright summer morning, when he came into my father's yard to look at some blooded animals that had just been imported from England. And well do I remember how the patriarch's face glowed and his eye shone as he gazed upon the noble creatures, and spoke in excited tones of the exquisite blending of beauty and strength in their mold. Never shall I forget the impressive appearance, the tall, spare figure, the glittering eye, and the commanding presence of the erect old man."

Poor as the General felt himself to be after his return home, he still found money to help an humble friend in his day of need. His servant George was arrested on a charge of murder. A quarrel among some slaves, of whom George was one, had ended in a general fight, in the course of which a man was killed, and "George Jackson" was accused of having struck the fatal blow. The General satisfied himself, by protracted examinations of George and the other combatants, that his favorite was innocent. Nevertheless, George's case wore an ugly look, and there was much formidable evidence against him. The General threw himself into the defense of his man with a zeal and energy that could not have been surpassed if the accused party had been his successor in

the presidential chair. Besides employing the best counsel, he went to Nashville to give his personal aid nearly every day for six weeks. The trial lasted several days, during which the ex-President was never absent from the courtroom when the court was in session. George was acquitted. This affair cost the General fifteen hundred dollars, besides a world of labor and trouble. George, who was born and reared upon the estate, still lives to serve the General's son, and to tell how "old master" saved him from the clutches of the hangman. He is an old man now, but he occasionally avails himself of his position of favorite to repeat some of his Washington frolics.

General Jackson, always an assiduous letter-writer, was as busy as ever with his pen after his final return to the Hermitage. His mail-box at the gate of his garden was daily stuffed with letters, newspapers, documents, and pamphlets. He answered every letter that required an answer, unless he was too weak to sit at the desk. His letters to private friends during this period relate chiefly to the affairs of his plantation, and to his constant suffering from disease and debility.

The Hermitage was still the seat of hospitality. Besides the numberless friends and acquaintances of its inmates, it was visited by many who came as pilgrims to the democratic shrine. Who could visit Nashville without driving out to see "the General!" All were welcomed cordially, whether they were friends or strangers. Dr. William A. Shaw, a warm lover of the General, and who lives, very properly, at Jacksonport, Jackson County, Arkansas, has kindly written out for these pages some of his recollections of a long stay at the Hermitage in 1839—particularly the conversation of the ex-President. Dr. Shaw writes :

"With regard to the quelling of the mutiny, during the Creek war, by presenting a pistol to Major Hart's breast, as reported by Eaton, the General stated to me, while we were alone at his fireside, that it was with an *empty gun*, which he took from a sentinel pacing his rounds before his tent, that this mutiny was quelled. Hart told his men to stop, and observed to

a subordinate officer, 'd—d if I don't believe the old fellow will shoot.' The mutiny being quelled, the sentinel, while reclaiming his gun, observed to General Jackson, 'Why, Gineral, that gun ain't loaded—not even primed.' 'Never mind,' said the General, 'it has answered my purpose as well as if it had been loaded and primed to the muzzle.'

"In regard to the 'rampart or breastwork of *cotton bags* at New Orleans,' General Jackson, who, at my request, described the whole battle, declared to me, there was not a bale of cotton on the field. 'I had,' said he 'the sand bags filled with sand, and piled them on empty store boxes, in a long line, but only a few feet high, while on one end of my line (laughing) there was a corn-field fence to extend it!'

"I had a great deal of military conversation with him, and was surprised how well acquainted he was with ancient and modern wars. The quickness of his perception in military matters—in regard to infantry, artillery, and cavalry—reminded me of the lightning's flash when I proposed certain field movements to him. Indeed, on all subjects, quick perception and a dauntless presence of mind, that never deserted him, distinguished this great man. He told me, in reply to a question, 'that he never had a tremor of his hands in his life; that his nerves were like steel bars.'

"His description of the surrender of the British to our troops, 'Five hundred men, without a single wound, rising up from their prostrate position slowly and solemnly, as it were, out of the ground,' he declared, 'reminded him more of the resurrection at the last day than any thing he had ever read or conceived of.' He stated that he had only six killed and seven wounded in that battle, and only one of the seven wounded died. 'Is there such another battle,' I inquired, 'where the loss was so inconsiderable on the victorious side, allowing for the numbers engaged?' 'Not one, so far as my researches have gone,' said he. Indeed, the victory at New Orleans was the old hero's greatest pride, as it was his greatest exploit.

"I alluded to the calumnies which assailed him, as to his skepticism, during the electioneering canvass. 'Yes, sir!' said he, emphatically, 'for thirty-five years before my election to the Presidency, I read at least three chapters of the Bible every day, which is far more than any of my detractors could say, with truth, of their own conduct in this respect.'

"In sentiment General Jackson avowed to me Arminian views, though he was a Presbyterian of the old school church. 'I believe,' said he, 'every man has a *chance* for his own salvation.'

"Recurring to New Orleans, he said that, though Constantinople is the great central key to commerce, she has no large fertile valley like the great Mississippi valley to sustain her, and as long as she belongs to Turkey she will decrease, while New Orleans will be the largest commercial em-

porium on this continent, and, probably, in the world. This led him to speak of Russia as the great eastern rival of the United States of America, rising *pari passu* with her. 'I do not apprehend war with Great Britain,' said he, 'for a long period. The next great war we have will be with Russia.' I reminded him of our present amity with Russia as our best friend in Europe. 'True,' said he, 'but a growing absolute monarchy and a thriving democratic government are naturally antagonistic. It is easy to find pretexts for war; our vicinity to her North-western Pacific possessions will suffice. France and England have helped to aggrandize Russia by bad policy. I told Mr. Fox, minister from Great Britain, while I was President, that England and France would weep tears of blood for helping Russia at Navarino.' 'Well,' inquired I, 'what will be the result of our war with Russia, in the event it comes?' 'We will beat them, sir; we can whip all Europe with United States soldiers. Give me,' said he, with great emphasis and a sparkling eye, 'a thousand Tennesseans, and I'll whip any other thousand men on the globe!' I verily believed his declaration. He spoke of the wonderful aid from 'flying artillery' as having revolutionized modern warfare. His encomiums on it were amply justified by our last war in Mexico. I delight to recur to these conversations, in which General Jackson's sagacity and judgment are so manifest, because his traducers have misrepresented him as a rash, reckless—brave, indeed, but inconsiderate—leader, either in battle or in the Cabinet. Never was so great a misconception in regard to a great public character. He was a consummate politician, but his almost intuitive quickness to discern *the very thing to be done*, caused slower minds to mistake prompt execution for reckless precipitancy.

"General Jackson was a thorough Union man in his feelings and principles. He loved his whole country, without sectional bias. The Federal Union embraced all the States in his large-hearted comprehensiveness. He expressed a contempt for nullification and secession.

"In regard to his removal of the Indians to the west, he defended it on the ground of its absolute necessity as well as humanity to the whites and the Indians. 'Every war,' said he, 'we had with the Indians was brought on by frontier ruffians, who stole their horses, oppressed, defrauded, or persecuted the Indians. This caused them to unbury the hatchet, and their massacres of the whites plunged innocent people in all the horrors and cruelties of war.'

"In allusion to his early history, he quoted Shakspeare's sentiment: 'There is a tide in the affairs of men, which, taken at the flood, leads on to fortune.' 'That's true, sir,' said he, with emphasis, 'I've proved it during my whole life.' "

A considerable number of interesting relics were destroyed



when the Hermitage was burnt in 1836, but the house was still a museum of curious gifts, which had been accumulating ever since the General returned from the wars in 1815. The pistols of General Washington we have already mentioned ; also the collection of magnificent and useless pipes, and the phæton made of the *Constitution's* glorious wood. Besides these, there was a wooden pitcher, holding not more than a quart, but composed of seven hundred and fifty staves, from the venerable elm under which William Penn made his famous treaty with the Indians. The hoops, lid, and handle were of silver, and the bottom was a magnifying glass, through which could be seen the joints of the vessel, which to the naked eye were invisible. This marvelous pitcher was given to the General by the coopers of Philadelphia. "Old Hickory" was the name of a goblet made from a hickory tree which had sprouted from where a cannon ball had severed the parent stem during the revolutionary war. Nature had graciously added a handle to the goblet, which was sent to the Hermitage from Long Island. Then there were Indian calumets and wampum, presented by Indian chiefs ; a bayonet, round which a root had grown, found on the battleground below New Orleans ; the cup and saucer last used by General Washington ; the gold medals and swords presented by Congress and other legislative bodies ; the silver vase presented by the ladies of Charleston ; the golden box given by the city of New York in 1819 ; and a gallery of portraits of the General's old comrades and friends. Among other small articles there was a piece of candle found in the quarters of Lord Cornwallis after he had surrendered to General Washington. This had been given to General Jackson long ago, with the condition that he should light it every fourth of July. The General complied with the condition for many successive years, until at last the candle became so short that he was obliged to omit the ceremony. To the day of his death General Jackson preserved the dueling pistols with one of which he had slain the hapless Dickinson. That very pistol was lying on the mantel-piece of his bed-room during

these last years of his life. To a gentleman who chanced to take it up, one day, the General said, in the most ordinary tone of conversation, "That is the pistol with which I killed Mr. Dickinson."

But among all the curiosities of the Hermitage, none was examined with so much interest as the coarse blue-and-yellow uniform which the General had worn at New Orleans, and which has since been placed in the Patent Office at Washington. The huge old family coach (almost as large and heavy as a mail-coach of the olden time), in which the General and his wife took many a long journey together, has now become a curiosity. This mighty vehicle, which cost twenty-five hundred dollars, was a present from the General to Mrs. Jackson. "She shall have a good coach to ride in when I am gone," said he to Major Lewis.

The ex-President's interest in the fortunes of his party was scarcely diminished by his retirement from public life. He corresponded frequently with Mr. Van Buren, whose leading measures he heartily approved, and whose firmness against the greatest pressure ever brought to bear upon an administration he could not but admire. When, in 1840, the general poverty of the people and the re-nomination of General Harrison threatened the democratic party with defeat, General Jackson exerted himself powerfully to secure his friend's reelection. Early in the canvass, he wrote a letter in behalf of Mr. Van Buren, which had at least the effect of creating in the minds of his opponents the most profound disgust. That he should warmly commend the administration of Mr. Van Buren was natural, proper, and expected. The offense of the letter lay in its closing paragraph: "In respect to the statements which have been made in several of the newspapers of the day that I disagree with many of my political friends in the estimate they have formed of General Harrison's military merits, I am not aware of having said any thing to justify them. Having never admired General Harrison as a military man, or considered him as possessing the qualities which constitute the commander of an

army, I have looked at his political relations alone in the opinions I have formed or expressed respecting his pretensions to the presidency, and the consequences which would result to the country, should the suffrages of the people place him in that high office."

This letter, published in nearly all the papers of the Union, called forth angry and contemptuous comment. I can not believe that it gained many votes for Mr. Van Buren.

In August, 1840, Mr. Clay, in compliance with a pressing invitation, visited Nashville and addressed an immense assemblage upon the political topics of the day. His reception was enthusiastic in the very highest degree. Nine cheers, such as have seldom been given to any man in this country except to Henry Clay, greeted his rising. His allusions to General Jackson were apparently respectful, but were, in reality, calculated, and, perhaps, were designed to be exquisitely offensive to him. "It was true," said Mr. Clay, "that he had some reluctance, some misgivings, about making this visit at this time, which grew out of a supposition that his motives might be misconstrued. The relations which had for a long time existed between himself and the illustrious captain in this neighborhood, were well understood. He feared, if he accepted the invitation to make the visit now, that it might be thought by some that his motives were less patriotic than sinister or selfish. But he assured that great assemblage, that toward that illustrious individual, their fellow-citizen and friend, he cherished, he possessed no unkind feelings. He was a great chieftain; he had fought well and bravely for his country; he hoped he would live long and enjoy much happiness, and, when he departed from this fleeting vale of tears, that he would enter into the abode of the just, made perfect."

Still harping on my *Chieftain!* In Mr. Clay's speech, as published in the authorized volumes, edited by Mr. Mallory, there is not one remark respecting General Jackson or his public conduct which was not legitimate. Indeed the speech chiefly consisted of humorous and satirical comments upon

the administration of Mr. Van Buren. He alluded, it is true, to the appointment of Mr. Livingston as Secretary of State, with the remark that he was a defaulter ; but he added, that he presumed "the President did not sufficiently reflect upon the tendency such an appointment would have." Other comments were made by Mr. Clay upon General Jackson's appointments, and upon the extraordinary and unexampled number of public officers who had recently become defaulters. The day after the delivery of Mr. Clay's speech, General Jackson sent to the *Nashville Union* the following communication :

TO THE EDITOR OF THE UNION.

"SIR: Being informed that the Hon. Henry Clay of Kentucky, in his public speech at Nashville yesterday, alleged that I had appointed the Hon. Edward Livingston Secretary of State when he was a defaulter and knowing him to be one, I feel that I am justified in declaring the charge to be false. It is known to all the country that the nominations made by the President to the Senate are referred to appropriate committees of that body, whose duty it is to inquire into the character of the nominees, and that if there is any evidence of default, or any disqualifying circumstances existing against them, a rejection of the nomination follows. Mr. Livingston was a member of the Senate from the state of Louisiana when he was nominated by me. Can Mr. Clay say he opposed the confirmation of his nomination, because he was a defaulter? If so, the journals of the Senate will answer. But his confirmation by the Senate is conclusive proof that no such objection, if made, was sustained, and I am satisfied that such a charge against him could not have been substantiated.

"I am also informed that Mr. Clay charged me with appointing Samuel Swartwout collector of the port of New York, knowing that he had been an associate of Aaron Burr. To this charge it is proper to say, that I knew of Mr. Swartwout's connection with Aaron Burr, precisely as I did that of Mr. Clay *himself*, who if the history of the times did not do him great injustice was far from avoiding an association with Burr when he was at the town of Lexington in Kentucky. Yet Mr. Clay was appointed Secretary of State, and I may say, confidently, with recommendations for character and fitness not more favorable than those produced to me by the citizens of New York in behalf of Mr. Swartwout. Mr. Clay, too, at the time of his own appointment to that high office, it will be recollected, was directly charged throughout the Union with having bargained for it, and

by none was this charge more earnestly made than by his present associates in Tennessee, Messrs. Bell and Foster.

"Under such circumstances how contemptible does this demagogue appear, when he descends from his high place in the Senate and roams over the country, retailing slanders against the living and the dead.

"ANDREW JACKSON.

"HERMITAGE, August, 18th, 1840."

To this communication Mr. Clay made an immediate reply, giving a correct outline of his speech, and asserting that he had spoken of General Jackson and his measures only in proper and becoming terms. "With regard," he concluded, "to the insinuations and gross epithets contained in General Jackson's note, alike impotent, malevolent, and derogatory from the dignity of a man who has filled the highest office in the universe, respect for the public and for myself allow me only to say that, like other similar missiles, they have fallen harmless at my feet, exciting no other sensation than that of scorn and contempt."

Toward the close of the campaign, General Jackson made a considerable tour in the western part of Tennessee, which tour, the party papers of that day inform us, was designed to aid the cause of Mr. Van Buren. One of these veracious sheets stated, "on authority to be relied upon," that the ex-President, in a bar-room filled with people, expressed the opinion "that Webster was sent over to England to negotiate a great mammoth bank in America, and that the dukes and lords and ladies of England were to be the stockholders, and that the whigs of the United States had defrayed the expenses of their conventions and barbecues with British gold, which had been sent over to this country for these purposes."

Another little paragraph from a Pennsylvania newspaper of September, 1840, may interest the reader: "Major John H. Eaton, General Jackson's biographer and Secretary of War, addressed, in our Court-house last night, a very large assembly of both political parties. His speech was truly a splendid effort in favor of Harrison and reform principles. I

assure you the way he praised 'Old Tip' was the right way."

The commercial disasters of 1837 and the depression that succeeded had not seriously inconvenienced General Jackson, with his magnificent farm and his hundred and fifty negroes. He repeatedly expressed the opinion that no one failed in that great revulsion who ought not to have failed. Not the faintest suspicion that any measure of his own had any thing to do with it ever found lodgment in his mind. He laid all the blame upon Biddle, paper money, and speculation.

In 1842, when business men began once more to hope for prosperous seasons, and the country awoke from its long lethargy, General Jackson became an anxious and embarrassed man through the misfortunes of his son. Money was not to be borrowed in the western country, even then, except at an exorbitant interest. He applied, in these circumstances, to his fast friend, Mr. Blair, of the *Globe*, who was then a man of fortune. Ten thousand dollars was the sum which the General deemed sufficient for his relief. Mr. Blair not only resolved on the instant to lend the money, but to lend it on the General's personal security, and to make the loan as closely resemble a gift as the General's delicacy would permit it to be. Mr. Rives desired to share the pleasure of accommodating General Jackson, and the loan was therefore made in the name of Blair and Rives. Upon reading Mr. Blair's reply to his application, the old man burst into tears. He handed the letter to his daughter, and she, too, was melted by the delicate generosity which it revealed. General Jackson, however, would accept the money only on conditions which secured his friends against the possibility of loss.

Not long after these interesting events, further relief was afforded General Jackson by the refunding of the fine which he had paid at New Orleans, in 1815, for the arrest of Judge Hall, and for refusing to obey the writ of *habeas corpus* issued by him. The fine was originally one thousand dollars, but the accumulated interest swelled the amount to twenty-seven hundred. Senator Linn, of Missouri, introduced the

bill for refunding the money, and gave it an earnest and persevering support. In the House the measure was strenuously supported by Mr. Douglas, of Illinois, and Mr. C. J. Ingersoll, of Pennsylvania, to both of whom General Jackson expressed his gratitude in the warmest terms. The bill was passed in the Senate by a party vote of twenty-eight to twenty—Mr. Calhoun voting with the friends of the ex-President ; in the House, by one hundred and fifty-eight to twenty-eight.

Congress thus notified the future commanders of armies, first, that they may place under martial law a city threatened by an enemy ; and, secondly, that they may keep it under martial law for the space of two months after the enemy has been vanquished, and driven from the soil and from the waters of the State in which that city is situated. In other words, Congress invested the military commanders of cities, in time of war, with supreme authority.

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## CHAPTER XLV.

### GENERAL JACKSON JOINS THE CHURCH.

THE north-of-Irelanders are a religious people. From his mother, from the traditions of his father and his race, from the example of his circle of relatives in the Carolinas, from his early attendance at the old log church in the Waxhaws, General Jackson had derived a regard for religion and its observances, which, in the wildest period of his life, was never wholly forgotten by him. To clergymen he always paid particular respect, and among them he found some of his warmest friends. Without ever being a “Sabbatarian,” he was an observer of the day of rest, and a church-goer. On Sunday mornings he would say to his guests : “Gentlemen, do what you please in my house ; *I* am going to church.” The language which Henry Clay employed upon moving the appoint-

ment of a national fast day, in view of the ravages of the cholera in 1832, describes exactly the religious feelings of General Jackson during sixty years of his life. "I am no member of a religious sect," said Mr. Clay. "I am not a professor of religion. I regret that I am not. I wish that I was, and I trust that I shall be. But I have, and I always have had, a profound respect for Christianity, the religion of my fathers, and for its rites, its usages, and its observances."

How much the religious tendencies of General Jackson were strengthened by the example of his wife, and how much more by her affecting death at the moment when he needed her most, we have already seen; and how he gave her his solemn promise to join the church as soon as he had done with politics. The letters which he wrote, during his presidency, to members of his own family, abound in religious expressions. The following to Mrs. Emily Donelson, the wife of his valued private secretary, will serve to show the strong tendency of his mind to religion during those exciting and turbulent years.

GENERAL JACKSON TO MRS. EMILY DONELSON.

"WASHINGTON, November 27th, 1836.

"MY DEAR EMILY: Your kind and acceptable letter of the 11th instant was received on the 23d, whilst I was confined to my bed by a severe hemorrhage from the lungs, which threatened a speedy end to my existence, but, with sincere thanks to a kind Providence, who holds our existence here in the hollow of His hand, I have so far recovered, as to be able to write you this letter, to acknowledge the receipt of yours, and to offer to Him who made us my most sincere and hearty thanks for His kindness to you in restoring you to health again, and with my prayers for your perfect recovery, and that you may be long spared to superintend the bringing up and educating of your dear children, and be a comfort to your dear husband, who has a great solicitude about you, and great anxiety to speedily return to you; but my sudden attack has detained him.

"I rejoice, my dear Emily, to find your spirits are good, and that you are able to take exercise daily. This is necessary to your perfect recovery; and trust in a kind Providence, that in time you will be completely restored to your health. You are young, and with care and good treatment, will outgrow your disease, but you must be careful not to take cold this



winter, and as soon as Doctor Hunt's prescription reaches you, I would advise you to pursue it. The digitalis, I fear, is too exciting to the pulse.

"The doctor tells me I lost from the lungs, and by the lancet and cupping, upwards of sixty ounces of blood, which stopped the hemorrhage without the aid of that potent, but pernicious, remedy to the stomach, *sugar of lead*. I am now mending as fast as I could expect, and if I can keep clear of taking cold this winter, I hope to be spared, and to return to the Hermitage in the spring, and again have the pleasure of seeing you and your dear children, to whom present me affectionately.

"My dear Emily, the chastisement by our Maker, we ought to receive as a rebuke from Him, and thank Him for the mildness of it—which was to bring to our view, and that it may be always before us, that we are mere tenants at will here. And we ought to live daily, so as to be prepared to die, for we know not when we may be called home. Then let us receive our chastisements as blessings from God; and let us so live that we may say with the sacred poet:

What though the Father's rod  
Drop a chastening stroke,  
Yet, lest it wound their souls too deep,  
Its fury shall be broke!

Deal gently, Lord, with those  
Whose faith and pious fear,  
Whose hope, and love, and every grace,  
Proclaim their hearts sincere.

"I must close with my blessing to you and the children. May God bless you and *all*. Emily, farewell. Affectionately,

"ANDREW JACKSON."

The promise which he made to his wife, in the grove that shades the Hermitage church he remembered, but did not strictly keep. In August, 1838, he wrote to one who had addressed him on the subject: "I would long since have made this solemn public dedication to Almighty God, but knowing the wretchedness of this world, and how prone many are to evil, that the scoffer of religion would have cried out—'hypocrisy! he has joined the church for political effect,' I thought it best to postpone this public act until my retirement to the shades of private life, when no false imputation could be made that might be injurious to religion." He passed two or three

years, however, in "the shades of private life," before he performed the act referred to in this letter.

From the Rev. Dr. Edgar, pastor of an influential Presbyterian church in Nashville, I received the information which is now to be imparted to the reader. It was a sermon of Dr. Edgar's that produced in General Jackson the state of mind that led to his connecting himself with the church, and it was Dr. Edgar who administered to him his first communion. He is, therefore, the source of trustworthy information on this interesting subject.

It was about the year 1839 that Dr. Edgar was first invited to the Hermitage for the purpose of administering religious advice to its inmates. Mrs. Jackson, the amiable and estimable wife of the General's son, was sick in body and troubled in mind. General Jackson invited his reverend friend to call and see her, and endeavor to clear her mind of the cloud of perplexity and apprehension which hung over it. In the course of her conversation with the Doctor, she chanced to say, in the General's hearing, that she felt herself to be "a great sinner."

"You a sinner?" interposed the General, "why, you are all purity and goodness! Join Dr. Edgar's church, by all means."

This remark was considered by the clergyman a proof that, at that time, General Jackson was "blind" as to the nature of true religion. Soon after this interview Mrs. Jackson's anxiety was relieved, and she waited to join the church only for a suitable opportunity.

Ere long a "protracted meeting" was held in the little church on the Hermitage farm. Dr. Edgar conducted the exercises, and the family at the Hermitage were constant in their attendance. The last day of the meeting arrived, which was also the last day of the week. General Jackson sat in his accustomed seat, and Dr. Edgar preached. The subject of the sermon was the interposition of Providence in the affairs of men, a subject congenial with the habitual tone of General Jackson's mind. The preacher spoke in detail of the

perils which beset the life of man, and how often he is preserved from sickness and sudden death. Seeing General Jackson listening with rapt attention to his discourse, the eloquent preacher sketched the career of a man who, in addition to the ordinary dangers of human life, had encountered those of the wilderness, of war, and of keen political conflict ; who had escaped the tomahawk of the savage, the attack of his country's enemies, the privations and fatigues of border warfare, and the aim of the assassin. How is it, exclaimed the preacher, that a man endowed with reason and gifted with intelligence can pass through such scenes as these unharmed, and not see the hand of God in his deliverance ? While enlarging on this theme, Dr. Edgar saw that his words were sinking deep into the General's heart, and he spoke with unusual animation and impressiveness.

The service ended, General Jackson got into his carriage, and was riding homeward. He was overtaken by Dr. Edgar on horseback. He hailed the Doctor, and said he wished to speak with him. Both having alighted, the General led the clergyman a little way into the grove.

"Doctor," said the General, "I want you to come home with me to-night."

"I can not to-night," was the reply ; "I am engaged elsewhere."

"Doctor," repeated the General, "I want you to come home with me to-night."

Dr. Edgar said that he had promised to visit that evening a sick lady, and he felt bound to keep his promise. General Jackson, as though he had not heard the reply, said a third time, and more pleadingly than before :

"Doctor, I *want* you to come home with me to-night."

"General Jackson," said the clergyman, "my word is pledged ; I can not break it ; but I will be at the Hermitage to-morrow morning very early."

The anxious man was obliged to be contented with this arrangement, and went home alone. He retired to his apartment. He passed the evening and the greater part of the

night in meditation, in reading, in conversing with his beloved daughter, in prayers. He was sorely distressed. Late at night, when his daughter left him, he was still agitated and sorrowful. What thoughts passed through his mind as he paced his room in the silence of the night, of *what* sins he repented, and *what* actions of his life he wished he had not done, no one knows, or will ever know.

But the value of this upheaving of the soul depends upon that. There is a repentance which is radical, sublime, regenerating. There is a repentance which is shallow and fruitless. Conversion means a turning. It is only when we know from what a man turns, and to what he turns, that we can know whether his turning is of any benefit to him. There is such a thing as a man's emancipating himself, in one night of agony and joy, in one thrilling instant of time, from the domination of pride and desire. He who is walking along the plain can not reach the mountain top in a moment; but in a moment he can set his face toward it, and begin to scale the height. Touching the nature and worth of this crisis in General Jackson's life I know nothing, and can say nothing. We shall soon have an opportunity of observing whether the *spirit* of the man had changed, or whether to the last he remained what we have seen him hitherto.

As the day was breaking, light seemed to dawn upon his troubled soul, and a great peace fell upon him.

To Dr. Edgar, who came to him soon after sunrise, General Jackson told the joyful history of the night, and expressed a desire to be admitted into the church with his daughter that very morning. The usual questions respecting doctrine and experience were satisfactorily answered by the candidate. Then there was a pause in the conversation. The clergyman said at length :

“General, there is one more question which it is my duty to ask you. Can you forgive all your enemies ?”

The question was evidently unexpected, and the candidate was silent for a while.

“My political enemies,” said he, “I can freely forgive ; but as for those who abused me when I was serving my country in the field, and those who attacked me *for* serving my country—Doctor, that is a different case.”

The Doctor assured him that it was not. Christianity, he said, forbade the indulgence of enmity absolutely and in all cases. No man could be received into a Christian church who did not cast out of his heart every feeling of that nature. It was a condition that was fundamental and indispensable.

After a considerable pause the candidate said that he thought he could forgive all who had injured him, even those who had assailed him for what he done for his country in the field. The clergyman then consented to his sharing in the solemn ceremonial of the morning, and left the room to communicate the glad tidings to Mrs. Jackson. She hastened to the General’s apartment. They rushed with tears into each other’s arms, and remained long in a fond and silent embrace.

The Hermitage church was crowded to the utmost of its small capacity ; the very windows were darkened with the eager faces of the servants. After the usual services, the General rose to make the required public declaration of his concurrence with the doctrines, and his resolve to obey the precepts, of the church. He leaned heavily upon his stick with both hands ; tears rolled down his cheeks. His daughter, the fair, young matron, stood beside him. Amid a silence the most profound, the General answered the questions proposed to him. When he was formally pronounced a member of the church, and the clergyman was about to continue the services, the long restrained feeling of the congregation burst forth in sobs and exclamations, which compelled him to pause for several minutes. The clergyman himself was speechless with emotion, and abandoned himself to the exultation of the hour. A familiar hymn was raised, in which the entire assembly, both within and without the church,

joined with an ecstatic fervor which at once expressed and relieved their feelings.\*

From this time to the end of his life, General Jackson spent most of his leisure hours in reading the Bible, biblical commentaries, and the hymn-book, which last he always pronounced in the old-fashioned way, *hime* book. The work known as "Scott's Bible" was his chief delight; he read it through twice before he died. Nightly he read prayers in the presence of his family and household servants. I say *read* prayers, for so I was informed by those who often heard him do it. But there has been published a description of the family worship at the Hermitage, which represents the General as delivering an *extempore* prayer.

The Hermitage church, after the death of Mrs. Jackson and the General's removal to Washington, had not been able to maintain itself; but the event which we have just related caused it to be reorganized. At one of the first meetings of the resuscitated church, General Jackson was nominated a "ruling elder."

"No," said he, "the Bible says, 'Be not hasty in laying on of hands.' I am too young in the church for such an office. My countrymen have given me high honors, but I should esteem the office of ruling elder in the church of Christ, a far higher honor than any I have ever received. I propose brother ——, and brother ——" (two aged neighbors.)

The misfortunes which had befallen his son induced General Jackson, in 1843, to cancel a will which he had made several years before, and to prepare a new one. The first will bestowed a handsome legacy upon a favorite nephew;

\* Rev. E. F. Berkley, an episcopal clergyman of Kentucky, writes: "Mr. Clay was baptized in his parlor at Ashland, on the 22d of June, 1847, in our usual way, by pouring a handful of water on his head, in the name of the Holy Trinity; one of his daughters-in-law and four of his grand-daughters being baptized at the same time, and in the same way. . . . The reason of his receiving this holy ordinance at home was, that my congregation at the time were building a new church edifice, and we had no fitter place for the performance of these sacred rites."

the second left the entire estate to his son in fee simple. In connection with this subject, Major Lewis related to me some interesting particulars of an interview between himself and the ex-President, which occurred just after the execution of the new will.

It was a beautiful morning in June. "Come, Major," said the General, "it's a pleasant day, let us take a stroll." He seemed very weak, scarcely able to walk; and had much difficulty in breathing. After walking a short distance, Major Lewis advised him to return, but he would not. A second and a third time, the Major entreated him to go no further. "No, Major," he said, "I set out to show you my cotton field, and I will go." They reached the field, at length, and sat down upon a stump to admire its flourishing appearance. Suddenly changing the subject, the General told his companion that he had made a new will, leaving his whole estate unconditionally to his son. Major Lewis ventured to remonstrate, and advised that a part of the property should be settled upon Mrs. Jackson and her children, enough to secure them against want in case his son's speculations should continue to be unsuccessful.

"No," said the General after a long pause, "that would show a want of confidence. If *she*," pointing to the tomb in the garden, "were alive, she would wish him to have it all, and to me her wish is law."

The new will, therefore, remained unaltered. It is a most characteristic document, and nothing in it is more characteristic than the honest anxiety it exhibited to secure the payment of the debt to Messrs. Blair and Rives.

#### GENERAL JACKSON'S WILL.

HERMITAGE, June 7th, 1843.

IN THE NAME OF GOD, AMEN:—I, Andrew Jackson, Sr., being of sound mind, memory, and understanding, and impressed with the great uncertainty of life and the certainty of death, and being desirous to dispose of my temporal affairs so that after my death no contention may arise rel-

ative to the same; and whereas, since executing my will of the 30th of September, 1833, my estate has become greatly involved by my liabilities for the debts of my well-beloved and adopted son, Andrew Jackson, Jr., which makes it necessary to alter the same: Therefore I, Andrew Jackson, Sr., of the County of Davidson, and State of Tennessee, do make, ordain, publish, and declare this my last will and testament, revoking all other wills by me heretofore made.

*First*, I bequeath my body to the dust whence it comes, and my soul to God who gave it, hoping for a happy immortality through the atoning merits of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Savior of the world. My desire is, that my body be buried by the side of my dear departed wife, in the garden at the Hermitage, in the vault prepared in the garden, and all expenses paid by my executor hereafter named.

*Secondly*, That all my just debts be paid out of my personal and real estate by my executor; for which purpose, to meet the debt of my good friends General J. B. Planchin & Co. of New Orleans, for the sum of six thousand dollars, with the interest accruing thereon, loaned to me to meet the debt due by A. Jackson, Jr., for the purchase of the plantation from Hiram G. Runnels, lying on the east bank of the river Mississippi, in the State of Mississippi; also, a debt due by me of ten thousand dollars, borrowed of my friends Blair and Rives, of the city of Washington and District of Columbia, with the interest accruing thereon, being applied to the payment of the lands bought of Hiram G. Runnels as aforesaid; and for the faithful payment of the aforesaid recited debts, I hereby bequeath all my real and personal estate. After these debts are fully paid,

*Thirdly*, I give and bequeath to my adopted son, Andrew Jackson, Jr., the tract of land whereon I now live, known as the Hermitage tract, with its butts and boundaries, with all its appendages of the three lots of land bought of Samuel Donelson, Thomas J. Donelson, and Alexander Donelson, sons and heirs of Savern Donelson, deceased, all adjoining the Hermitage tract, agreeable to their butts and boundaries, with all the appurtenances thereto belonging or in any wise appertaining, with all my negroes that I may die possessed of, with the exceptions hereafter named, with all their increase after the before recited debts are fully paid, with all the household furniture, farming tools, stock of all kind, both on the Hermitage tract farms, as well as those on the Mississippi plantation, to him and his heirs, for ever. The true intent and meaning of this my last will and testament is, that all my estate, real, personal, and mixed, is hereby first pledged for the payment of the above recited debts and interest; and when they are fully paid, the residue of all my estate, real, personal, and mixed, is hereby bequeathed to my adopted son A. Jackson, Jr., with the exceptions hereafter named, to him and his heirs for ever.

*Fourth*, Whereas I have heretofore by conveyance, deposited with my



beloved daughter, Sarah Jackson, wife of my adopted son, A. Jackson, Jr., given to my beloved granddaughter, Rachael Jackson, daughter of A. Jackson, Jr. and Sarah his wife, several negroes therein described, which I hereby confirm—I give and bequeath to my beloved grandson, Andrew Jackson, son of A. Jackson, Jr. and Sarah his wife, a negro boy named Ned, son of Blacksmith Aaron and Hannah his wife, to him and his heirs for ever.

*Fifth*, I give and bequeath to my beloved little grandson, Samuel Jackson, son of A. Jackson, Jr. and his much beloved wife Sarah, one negro boy named Davy or George, son of Squire and his wife Giney, to him and his heirs for ever.

*Sixth*, To my beloved and affectionate daughter, Sarah Jackson, wife of my adopted and well beloved son, A. Jackson, Jr., I hereby recognise, by this bequest, the gift I made her on her marriage, of the negro girl Gracy, which I bought for her, and gave her to my daughter Sarah as her maid and seamstress, with her increase, with my house-servant Hannah and her two daughters, namely, Charlotte and Mary, to her and her heirs for ever. This gift and bequest is made for my great affection for her—as a memento of her uniform attention to me and kindness on all occasions, and particularly when worn down with sickness, pain, and debility. She has been more than a daughter to me, and I hope she never will be disturbed in the enjoyment of this gift and bequest by any one.

*Seventh*, I bequeath to my well beloved nephew, Andrew J. Donelson, son of Samuel Donelson, deceased, the elegant sword presented to me by the State of Tennessee, with this injunction, that he fail not to use it when necessary in support and protection of our glorious union, and for the protection of the constitutional rights of our beloved country, should they be assailed by foreign enemies or domestic traitors. This, from the great change in my worldly affairs of late, is, with my blessing, all I can bequeath him, doing justice to those creditors to whom I am responsible. This bequest is made as a memento of the high regard, affection, and esteem I bear for him, as a high-minded, honest, and honorable man.

*Eighth*, To my grand-nephew, Andrew Jackson Coffee, I bequeath the elegant sword presented to me by the Rifle Company of New Orleans, commanded by Captain Beal, as a memento of my regard, and to bring to his recollection the gallant services of his deceased father, General John Coffee, in the late Indian and British war, under my command, and his gallant conduct in defense of New Orleans in 1814 and 1815, with this injunction: that he wield it in the protection of the rights secured to the American citizen under our glorious constitution, against all invaders, whether foreign foes or intestine traitors.

I bequeath to my beloved grandson, Andrew Jackson, son of A. Jackson, Jr., and Sarah his wife, the sword presented to me by the citizens of

Philadelphia with the intention: that he will always use it in defense of the constitution and the glorious men and the perpetration of the republic—*from speaking concerning the cause—Draw me not without occasion nor speak me without honor.*"

The picture of General Lafayette, which was presented by him to General George Washington and by Colonel William Robertson presented to me, I leave to George Washington Lafayette, as a monument of the illustrious personages through whose labors they have passed—his father, and the father of his country.

The great box presented to me by the corporation of the city of New York, the large water vase presented to me by the ladies of Charleston, South Carolina, my native State, with the large picture representing the unfurling of the American banner, presented to me by the citizens of South Carolina, when it was refused to be accepted by the United States Senate, I leave in trust to my son, A. Jackson, Jr., with directions that should our happy country not be blessed with peace, an event not always to be expected, he will, at the close of the war or end of the conflict, present each of said articles of inestimable value to that patriot, residing in the city or State from which they were presented, who shall be adjudged by his countrymen or the ladies to have been the most valiant in defense of his country and our country's rights.

The pocket spyglass which was used by General Washington during the revolutionary war, and presented to me by Mr. Custis, having been burned with my dwelling-house, the Hermitage, with many other invaluable relics, I can make no disposition of them. As a memento of my high regard for General Robert Armstrong, as a gentleman, patriot, and soldier, as well as for his meritorious military services under my command during the late British and Indian war, and remembering the gallant bearing of him and his gallant little band at Enotochopco creek, when, falling desperately wounded, he called out—"My brave fellows, some may fall, but save the cannon"—as a memento of all these things, I give and bequeath to him my case of pistols and sword worn by me throughout my military career, well satisfied that in his hands they will never be disgraced—that they will never be used or drawn without occasion, nor sheathed but with honor.

*Lastly*, I leave to my beloved son all my walking-canes and other relics, to be distributed among my young relatives—namesakes—first, to my much esteemed namesake, Andrew J. Donelson, son of my esteemed nephew, A. J. Donelson, his first choice, and then to be distributed as A. Jackson, Jr., may think proper.

*Lastly*, I appoint my adopted son, Andrew Jackson, Jr., my whole and sole executor to this my last will and testament, and direct that no security

be required of him for the faithful execution and discharge of the trusts hereby reposed in him.

In testimony whereof I have this 7th day of June, one thousand eight hundred and forty-three, hereunto set my hand, and affixed my seal, hereby revoking all wills heretofore made by me, and in the presence of

MARION ADAMS,  
ELIZABETH D. LOVE,  
THOS. J. DONELSON,  
RICHARD SMITH,  
R. ARMSTRONG.

ANDREW JACKSON (*Seal*).

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## CHAPTER XLVI.

### GENERAL JACKSON ANNEXES TEXAS.

“EXTENDING the area of freedom” (to use his own language), by the annexation of Texas, was the last political project which occupied the thoughts and the pen of Andrew Jackson. In promoting this important measure he displayed an energy and a pugnacity seldom exhibited, before or since, by a politician in his seventy-seventh year.

For forty years or more General Jackson had cherished the desire to push the Spaniards further back from the western boundary of the United States. In Col. Burr’s filibustering scheme of 1806, so far as it related to the conquest of Texas, he had heartily sympathised. Yet he assented to the Spanish treaty of 1819, which gave us Florida, and gave up Texas. We have shown that he did so in a previous volume.\* To the opinions expressed in 1820 he adhered, so far as is known, until he came to the presidency in 1829, when an attempt was made to obtain Texas by negotiation, which failed.

In 1830, General Sam Houston, as we have seen, came to Washington, a man ruined in fortune and impaired in

\* See Vol. II., p. 585.

reputation. He lived for a while in a boarding-house, where also resided a certain Dr. Robert Mayo, once a well known name, long ago forgotten. With Mayo General Houston gradually became intimate, and to him he finally confided the particulars of a grand project for wresting Texas from the feeble grasp of Mexico, and founding an independent republic. Dr. Mayo, who was then one of those waiters upon Providence whom we call office-seekers, betrayed his new acquaintance, and revealed the scheme to the President in a long letter. Heading his epistle with the cipher which the adventurers employed in their secret correspondence, he proceeded to impart to the President the substance of Houston's revelations. "I learned from him," wrote Mayo, "that he was organizing an expedition against Texas; to afford a cloak to which he had assumed the Indian costume, habits, and associations, by settling among them in the neighborhood of Texas. That nothing was more easy to accomplish than the conquest and possession of that extensive and fertile country, by the coöperation of the Indians in the Arkansas Territory, and recruits among the citizens of the United States. That in his view it would hardly be necessary to strike a blow to wrest Texas from Mexico. That it was ample for the establishment and maintenance of a separate and independent government from the United States. That the expedition would be got ready with all possible despatch, that the demonstration would and *must* be made in about twelve months from that time. That the event of success opened the most unbounded prospects of wealth to those who would embark in it, and that it was with a view to facilitate his recruiting he wished to elevate himself in the public confidence by the aid of my communications to the *Richmond Enquirer*. That I should have a surgeoncy in the expedition, and he recommended me, in the mean time, to remove along with him and practice physic among the Indians in the territory.\*

\* Eight Years in Washington. By Dr. Robert Mayo, Baltimore, 1839

Soon after General Houston had made these communications, Mayo fell in with another of the confederates, who confirmed them—a Mr. Hunter, who had been recently dismissed from the Military Academy at West Point. Hunter informed Dr. Mayo that “he was a *bona fide* agent of the recruiting service for this district; that there were agencies established in all the principal towns; that several thousands had already enlisted along the seaboard, from New England to Georgia, inclusive: that each man paid thirty dollars to the common fund, and took an oath of secrecy and good faith to the cause on joining the party; that they were to repair, in their individual capacities as travelers, to different points on the banks of the Mississippi, where they had already chartered steamboats on which to embark, and thence ply to their rendezvous, somewhere in the territory of Arkansas or Texas, convenient for action.”

Here was an *exact* reproduction of the Burr project of 1806. The revelations of Hunter were communicated to the President by the zealous Mayo.

When we consider the relations existing between General Jackson and General Houston, it is difficult to believe that the President was ignorant of Houston's designs. His office, however, compelled him to assume an attitude of opposition to them. Upon the back of Dr. Mayo's letter he wrote these words: “Dr. Mayo on the contemplated invasion of Texas, private and confidential—a letter to be written confidential, to the secretary of the Territory of Arkansas, with copy of confidential letter to Wm. Fulton, Esq., secretary to the Territory of Florida.” This indorsement seems to indicate agitation in the mind of the writer, for the “Wm. Fulton, Esq.,” mentioned in it was not the “secretary of the Territory of Florida,” but the secretary of the Territory of Arkansas.

A letter was written, marked “strictly confidential,” which communicated the substance of Mayo's information, but expressed the opinion that that information was “erron-

eous." Nevertheless, Mr. Fulton was ordered to be on the look-out for a possible descent upon Texas, and to let the President know if any suspicious movements were made in the south-western country. In all that he did Mr. Fulton was enjoined to observe the "utmost secrecy."

In due time, Gen. Houston entered upon the execution of his scheme. That he experienced no serious hindrance from the government of the United States, and that General Jackson watched his movements with interest and with sympathy, are facts well known to us. The last year of General Jackson's presidency saw Houston master of the province, and Santa Aña a prisoner in his hands. Santa Aña was permitted to retire to Mexico on the condition that he should use his influence to induce his government to acknowledge the independence of Texas. A mob prevented his return. In the spring of 1837, he came to Washington; had several interviews with General Jackson, the purport of which has not been disclosed; and was sent home in a national vessel.

Before finally leaving the White House, General Jackson employed many hours in burning useless papers, and in returning letters to the authors of them. Dr. Mayo received back his letter of 1830, and with it, in the same envelope, a copy, in General Jackson's own hand, of the letter to Mr. Fulton, referred to above. The sending of the Fulton letter was probably an accident. Instead of returning it to the President, Mayo showed it to members of the Opposition, one of whom, Mr. John Quincy Adams, read it to the House of Representatives for a purpose that is obvious. General Jackson avowed the belief, in an affidavit, that Dr. Mayo had *stolen* the Fulton letter from his office in the White House. Dr. Mayo swore that he received it with his own confidential epistle. In either case, General Jackson was not far wrong when he spoke of his own letter to Fulton as the letter "purloined" by Dr. Mayo.

With this explanation, the reader is prepared to under-

stand the events which roused the aged lion from the quiescence natural to his years, and caused him to roar and show his teeth, as of old.

General Harrison had triumphed and died. Mr. Tyler, the Vice-President had succeeded him. The presidential election of 1844 was approaching. Henry Clay, the beloved, the often disappointed, was to be the candidate for the whigs. Mr. Van Buren, defeated in 1840 because of his immovable devotion to the principles of his party, was the man entitled by that party's "usages," to be its candidate in 1844. A faction, headed (according to Col. Benton) by Mr. Calhoun, was resolved upon his being dropped by the nominating convention. To effect their purpose, the faction devised a new and popular "issue," or, as we now phrase it, a "new plank in the platform ;" one upon which Mr. Van Buren could not stand ; namely, the immediate annexation of Texas. As Mexico had not yet acknowledged the independence of the revolted province, its annexation to the United States was equivalent to a declaration of war against Mexico. But what of that if a president could be elected thereby ? Early in 1843, Mr. Gilmer of Virginia, a particular friend of Mr. Calhoun, published in a Baltimore newspaper, an elaborate plea for immediate annexation, on the ground that Great Britain had designs upon Texas.

Mr. Gilmer's letter was sent to General Jackson by Mr. Aaron V. Brown, member of Congress from Tennessee, with a request for the General's opinion thereon. The object of the intriguers was to obtain from General Jackson a strong expression of opinion in favor of immediate annexation ; to keep his letter a secret until a contrary opinion had been published by Mr. Van Buren ; and, finally, to produce General Jackson's letter in the democratic convention, to the annihilation of Mr. Van Buren's hopes. General Jackson, suspecting no intrigue, replied to Mr. Brown with the utmost promptitude and completeness.

GENERAL JACKSON TO MR. A. V. BROWN.

"HERMITAGE, February 12, 1842.

"MY DEAR SIR: Yours of the 23d ultimo has been received, and with it the *Madisonian*, containing Governor Gilmer's letter on the subject of the annexation of Texas to the United States.

"You are not mistaken in supposing that I have formed an opinion on this interesting subject. It occupied much of my attention during my presidency, and, I am sure, has lost none of its importance by what has since transpired.

"Soon after my election, in 1829, it was made known to me by Mr. Erwin, formerly our minister at the Court of Madrid, that whilst at that Court he had laid the foundation of a treaty with Spain for the cession of the Floridas and the settlement of the boundary of Louisiana, fixing the western limit of the latter at the Rio Grande, agreeably to the understanding of France; that he had written home to our government for powers to complete and sign this negotiation; but that, instead of receiving such authority, the negotiation was taken out of his hands and transferred to Washington, and a new treaty was there concluded, by which the Sabine, and not the Rio Grande, was recognized and established as the boundary of Louisiana.

"Finding that these statements were true, and that our government did really give up that important territory, when it was at its option to retain it, I was filled with astonishment. The right of the territory was obtained from France. Spain stood ready to acknowledge it to the Rio Grande, and yet the authority asked by our Minister to insert the true boundary was not only withheld, but in lieu of it, a limit was adopted which stripped us of the whole of the vast country lying between the two rivers.

"On such a subject, I thought with the ancient Romans, that it was right never to cede any land or boundary of the republic, but always to add to it by honorable treaty, thus extending the area of freedom; and it was in accordance with this feeling that I gave our minister to Mexico instructions to enter upon a negotiation for the retrocession of Texas to the United States.

"This negotiation failed, and I shall ever regret it as a misfortune to both Mexico and the United States. Mr. Gilmer's letter presents many of the considerations which, in my judgment, rendered the step necessary to the peace and harmony of the two countries; but the point in it, at that time, which most strongly impelled me to the course I pursued, was the injustice done to us by the surrender of the territory, when it was obvious that it could have been retained without increasing the consideration afterwards given for the Floridas. I could not but feel that the surrender of so vast and important a territory was attributable to an erroneous estimate



of the tendency of our institutions, in which there was mingled somewhat of jealousy to the rising greatness of the South and West.

"But I forbear to dwell on this part of the history of this question. It is past, and can not now be undone. We can now only look at it as one of annexation, if Texas presents it to us; and if she does, I do not hesitate to say that the welfare and happiness of our union require that it should be accepted.

"If, in a military point of view alone, the question be examined, it will be found to be most important to the United States to be in possession of that territory.

"Great Britain has already made treaties with Texas, and we know that far-seeing nation never omits a circumstance, in her extensive intercourse with the world, which can be turned to account in increasing her military resources. May she not enter into an alliance with Texas? and reserving, as she doubtless will, the north-western boundary question as the cause of war with us whenever she chooses to declare it, let us suppose that, as an ally with Texas, we are to fight her! Preparatory to such a movement, she sends her 20,000 or 30,000 men to Texas; organizes them on the Sabine, where her supplies and arms can be concentrated before we have even notice of her intentions; makes a lodgment on the Mississippi; excites the negroes to insurrection; the lower country falls, and with it New Orleans; and a servile war rages through the whole South and West.

"In the meanwhile, she is also moving an army along the western frontier from Canada, which, in coöperation with the army from Texas, spreads ruin and havoc from the Lakes to the Gulf of Mexico.

"Who can estimate the national loss we may sustain, before such a movement could be repelled with such forces as we could organize on short notice?

"Remember that Texas borders upon us, on our west, to 42° of north latitude, and is our southern boundary to the Pacific. Remember, also, that if annexed to the United States, our western boundary would be the Rio Grande, which is of itself a fortification, on account of its extensive, barren, and uninhabitable plains. With such a barrier on our west we are invincible. The whole European world could not, in combination against us, make an impression on our Union. Our population on the Pacific would rapidly increase, and soon be strong enough for the protection of our eastern whalers, and, in the worst event, could always be sustained by timely aids from the intermediate country.

"From the Rio Grande, over land, a large army could not march, or be supplied, unless from the Gulf by water, which, by vigilance, could always be intercepted; and to march an army near the Gulf, they could be harassed by militia, and detained until an organized force could be raised to meet them.

"But I am in danger of running into unnecessary details, which my debility will not enable me to close. The question is full of interest also, as it affects our domestic relations, and as it may bear upon those of Mexico to us. I will not undertake to follow it out to its consequences in those respects, though I must say that, in all aspects, the annexation of Texas to the United States promises to enlarge the circle of free institutions, and is essential to the United States, particularly as lessening the probabilities of future collision with foreign powers, and giving them greater efficiency in spreading the blessings of peace.

"I return you my thanks for your kind letter on this subject, and subscribe myself, with great sincerity, your friend and obedient servant,

"ANDREW JACKSON.

"HON. A. V. BROWN."

The opinions expressed in this letter are directly contrary to those held by General Jackson in 1820. In a letter to Mr. Monroe, written in that year, and printed in a previous volume of this work, he said: "With the Floridas in our possession, our fortifications completed, Orleans, the great emporium of the West, is safe. . . . From Texas an invading enemy will never attempt such an enterprise; if he does, I will vouch that the invader will pay for his temerity." For these reasons, General Jackson, in 1820, was "clearly of the opinion that, for the present, we ought to be content with the Floridas," and he, therefore, approved the treaty of 1819.

For the space of eleven months the letter to Mr. Brown was kept secret, or shown only to a few of the leading confederates. Mr. Van Buren, meanwhile, had declared himself in favor of annexation when it could be effected honorably, and without incurring a needless risk of war; but he was opposed to the project of immediate annexation, regardless of the rights of Mexico. In March, 1844, the conspirators, after having perpetrated the fraud of changing the date of General Jackson's letter from 1843 to 1844, gave it publicity in the *Richmond Inquirer*. The friends of Mr. Van Buren were alarmed, and the General was apprized of the trick. Mr. B. F. Butler, it was reported at the time, visited the Hermitage for the purpose of making him fully acquainted with it. General Jackson could not retract; but he pub-

lished a second Texas letter, which, though it reaffirmed the positions of the first, contained passages eulogizing Mr. Van Buren in the highest terms. In concluding this second letter, the ex-President said: "I can not close these remarks without saying that my regard for Mr. Van Buren is so great, and my confidence in his love of country is strengthened by so long and intimate an acquaintance, that no difference on this subject can change my opinion of his character. He has evidently prepared his letter from a knowledge only of the circumstances bearing on the subject as they existed at the close of his administration, without a view of the disclosures since made, and which manifest the probability of a dangerous interference with the affairs of Texas by a foreign power."

This letter could not save Mr. Van Buren from defeat in the nominating convention—so powerful was the combination against him. Mr. Polk of Tennessee, whose name had scarcely been mentioned in connection with the first office, received the nomination. Polk, of course, was strenuous for instantaneous annexation. He would have favored the annexation of the infernal regions if "the party" had made it an "issue;" for he was a politician of the New York school.

The first Texas letter of General Jackson contained certain allegations respecting the administration of Mr. Monroe which could not be expected to pass unquestioned. General Jackson charged that administration with giving up Texas needlessly and wantonly. Mr. John Quincy Adams was alive to meet the accusation, and he did meet it in a manner that roused the angry passions of his old antagonist. He not only denounced General Jackson's assertion as preposterous, incredible and groundless, but repeated his statement, made years before in the House of Representatives, that General Jackson had approved the treaty of 1819. Again he produced his diary in proof of his assertions, and explained how it was that General Jackson had approved the treaty though he was absent from Washington at the time it was concluded.\* "I

\* This matter is referred to in Vol. II., p. 588 of this work, where Mr. Adams is said to have been in error. When that volume was published I had not discovered the explanation given by Mr. Adams in 1844.

have not said," remarked Mr. Adams, "that General Jackson was consulted on the day upon which the treaty was signed. That would have been too late for consultation. The consultation with General Jackson was on the second and third days of February, 1819, before the proposal of the Sabine for the boundary had been made finally to Mr. Onis. If General Jackson had given an opinion against it, I am persuaded that Mr. Monroe would still have persisted in making the offer. He was not earnestly intent upon the acquisition west of the Sabine, then a wilderness, and which he thought would weaken us, by extending a line of defenseless coast upon the Gulf, always exposed to invasion by a foreign naval power."

Mr. Adams' address elicited from General Jackson an outrageous reply, which, though addressed to a private individual, was immediately published in the newspapers.

GENERAL JACKSON TO GENERAL ROBERT ARMSTRONG.

"HERMITAGE, October 22d, 1844.

"DEAR SIR: I thank you for the copy of the intelligence containing the address of John Q. Adams to the Young Men's Club of Boston, delivered on the 7th instant.

"This address is a labored attempt on the part of Mr. Adams to discredit the testimony of Mr. Erving, whose statements were referred to in my letter to the Hon. A. V. Brown of February 12th, 1843; and like most of the productions from a diseased mind, proves little else but its own weakness and folly.

"My letter to Mr. Brown was published on the 20th of March, 1844, in Washington city, where Mr. Adams was at that time. It has been the subject of comment in the newspaper presses of both parties in all portions of the Union; and the statements of Mr. Erving, and the inferences from them have not been deemed worthy of the notice of Mr. Adams until now, just before the close of the presidential canvass, he pretends to have discovered that great injustice has been done him, and he makes a childish appeal to his own '*diary*' to screen him from the odium which has fallen upon his treachery to the best interests of his country.

"Mr. Adams has been seven months in preparing this tissue of deception for the public. I pledge my countrymen, as soon as I can obtain the papers, not now in my possession, referred to in the letter to Mr. Brown, to prove not only that Mr. Adams has no cause of complaint against me,

but that his veracity, like his diplomacy, can not be propped up by his 'diary.'

"I say, in advance of the review I shall take of this extraordinary production, thus heralded before the public on the eve of the presidential election, that the assertion of my having advised the treaty of 1819 is a bare-faced falsehood, without the shadow of proof to sustain it; and that the entire address is full of statements at war with truth, and sentiments hostile to every dictate of patriotism.

"Who but a traitor to his country can appeal as Mr. Adams does to the youth of Boston, in the close of his address? 'Your trial is approaching. The spirit of freedom and the spirit of slavery are drawing together for the deadly conflict of arms. The annexation of Texas to this Union is the blast of the trumpet for a foreign, civil, servile, and Indian war, of which the government of the United States, fallen into faithless hands, has already twice given the signal—first, by a shameless treaty rejected by a virtuous Senate; and again, by the glove of defiance hurled by the apostle of nullification at the avowed policy of the British empire, peacefully to promote the extinction of slavery throughout the world. Young men of Boston, burnish your armor, prepare for the conflict; and I say to you, in the language of Galgacus to the ancient Britons, think of your forefathers, think of your posterity!'

"What is this but delusion, or, what is worse, a direct appeal to arms, to oppose the decision of the American people, should it be favorable to the annexation of Texas to the United States?

"I may be blamed for spelling Mr. Erving's name wrong, but I trust I shall never deserve the shame of mistaking the path of duty where my country's rights are involved. I believed, from the disclosures made to me of the transactions of 1819, that Mr. Adams surrendered the interests of the United States when he took the Sabine river as the boundary between us and Spain, when he might have gone to the Colorado, if not to the Rio del Norte. Such was the natural inference from the facts stated by Mr. Erving; and there is nothing in the account now given of the negotiation to alter this impression. The address, on the contrary, does not at all relieve Mr. Adams. It proves that he was then, as now, an alien to the true interests of his country; but he had not then, as now, the pretext of coöperation with Great Britain in her peaceful endeavors to extinguish slavery throughout the world.

"Is there an American patriot that can read the above extract, and other similar ones that may be taken from the address of this monarchist in disguise, without a feeling of horror? Grant that the thousands who think with me that the addition of Texas to our Union would be a national benefit, are in error, are we to be deterred from the expression of our opinions by threats of armed opposition? And is it in this manner

that the peaceful policy of Great Britain is to be carried into execution. should the American people decide that we are in error? Or does Mr. Adams mean to intimate that the will of Great Britain should be the law for American statesmen, and will be enforced at the point of the bayonet by those who descend from the patriots of our revolution.

"Instead of going to British history for sentiments worthy of the republican youth of our country, on an occasion so vitally affecting our national safety and honor, I would recommend those in General Washington's farewell address, and particularly his warning to us to avoid entangling alliances with foreign nations, and whatever is calculated to create sectional or geographical parties at home.

"I am, very truly, your obedient servant,

"ANDREW JACKSON."

General Jackson forwarded this letter to Mr. Blair, of the *Globe*, requesting him to publish it, and to accompany it with such remarks as would exhibit Mr. Adams "in his true colors to the American people." In speaking of Mr. Adams reading the Fulton letter to the House of Representatives, General Jackson asked Mr. Blair: "Was there ever such dishonorable conduct practiced by any man of the least pretension to respectability before? But this is an act of perfidy on the part of one once holding the elevated station of the presidency! True, he obtained it by intrigue, bargain, and corruption; but the distinction should have imparted some consideration for the public's sense of honor, if he himself had no sense of the kind."

Mr. Adams made a sharp, indignant reply. "I *exhibited*," said he, "to the young men at Boston the volume of my diary containing the entries made at the time of this consultation, and extracts from which I read to them and have published. The volume is still in my possession. I re-affirm before God and my country, that the published extracts are true copies of entries made at the time of their dates, and that the facts stated by them are true. Andrew Jackson has responded to my summons, but he has not put himself upon the country, either with regard to his charge against me, or to my charge against him. He blusters, but he retreats. He pours forth invectives, but he flinches."

Enough of this pitiful quarrel. How different the correspondence between John Adams and Thomas Jefferson in their old age !

General Jackson bestirred himself zealously to secure the election of Messrs. Polk and Dallas. He published anew his old charge of bargain and corruption against Mr. Clay, declaring his belief in it unchanged. His letters indorsing the democratic nominations were numerous and were industriously circulated. Perhaps it is not too much to say that the controlling cause of Henry Clay's unexpected defeat in 1844 was the opposition of Andrew Jackson.

Great was the joy of General Jackson at the election of Mr. Polk. In a field adjoining the Hermitage he entertained two hundred guests at dinner, in honor of the event. His anxiety, however, on the subject of annexation appeared to increase rather than diminish after the election. On the first day of the last year of his life, he wrote a long letter to his friend Blair, urging him to use all his influence to induce Congress to act with promptitude in the matter.

One of the secret conditions upon which Mr. Polk obtained the support of the nullifiers was, that the *Globe* should not be the organ of his administration. General Jackson, ignorant of this condition, was puzzled, astonished, and indignant when he perceived the movements preliminary to the shelving of his old friend and staunch ally. "How loathsome," he wrote to Mr. Blair, April 9th, 1845, "it is to me to see an old friend laid aside, principles of justice and friendship forgotten, and all for the sake of *policy*—and the great democratic party divided or endangered for *policy*. I can not reflect upon it with any calmness ; every point of it, upon scrutiny, turns to harm and disunion, and not one beneficial result can be expected from it. I will be anxious to know the result. If harmony is restored, and the *Globe* the organ, I will rejoice ; if sold, to whom, and for what ? *Have, if you sell, the purchase money well secured.* This may be the last letter I may be able to write you ; but live

or die, I am your friend (and never deserted one from *policy*), and leave my papers and reputation in your keeping."

General Jackson was never enlightened as to the cause of Mr. Polk's extraordinary conduct. Mr. Blair, happily for himself, went into retirement ; the editor of the *Union* reigned in his stead ; the democratic party was NULLIFIED.

The well known correspondence between Commodore Elliot and General Jackson, with regard to the sarcophagus of the Roman emperor, occurred in the spring of the last year of the General's life. "Last night," wrote the blunt sailor, (March 18th, 1845) "I made something of a speech at the National Institute (Washington, D. C.,) and have offered for their acceptance the sarcophagus which I obtained at Palestine, brought home in the Constitution, and believed to contain the remains of the Roman Emperor, Alexander Severus, with the suggestion that it might be tendered you for your final resting place. I pray you, General, to live on in the fear of the Lord ; dying the death of a Roman soldier ; an emperor's coffin awaits you."

The General replied : "With the warmest sensations that can inspire a grateful heart, I must decline accepting the honor intended to be bestowed. I can not consent that my mortal body shall be laid in a repository prepared for an emperor or a king. My republican feelings and principles forbid it ; the simplicity of our system of government forbids it ; every monument erected to perpetuate the memory of our heroes and statesmen ought to bear evidence of the economy and simplicity of our republican institutions, and the plainness of our republican citizens, who are the sovereigns of our glorious Union, and whose virtue is to perpetuate it. True virtue can not exist where pomp and parade are the governing passions : it can only dwell with the people—the great laboring and producing classes that form the bone and sinew of our confederacy. I have prepared an humble depository for my mortal body beside that wherein lies my beloved wife, where, without any pomp or parade, I have requested, when my God calls me to sleep with my fathers, to be laid ; for



both of us there to remain until the last trumpet sounds to call the dead to judgment, when we, I hope, shall rise together, clothed with that heavenly body promised to all who believe in our glorious Redeemer, who died for us that we might live, and by whose atonement I hope for a blessed immortality."

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## CHAPTER XLVII.

### THE CLOSING SCENES.

A TOUGHER piece of slender manhood than Andrew Jackson never lived. Inheriting a constitution that was never robust, he had been for thirty-one years a diseased man. He went into the Creek war in 1813, wounded and weak from the loss of blood, to encounter hardships and privations that were borne with difficulty by strong men in perfect health. He came home in 1815, with his digestive powers impaired beyond remedy. Thenceforth, he was an invalid—often prostrated, always liable to be so after the slightest departure from the regimen prescribed to him. In 1825, occurred the accident that opened afresh, and internally, the wound which he had received from Charles Dickinson in 1806. From that time he was subject to attacks of hemorrhage, which often brought him to the very verge of dissolution. Thrice during his presidency, his nearest friends despaired of his life, and during the greater part of it he was debilitated to a degree that would have prevented most men from transacting business.

His habits with regard to diet and medicine were not such as enable ordinary men to make the most of a shattered constitution. Coffee and tobacco he used profusely. He both smoked and chewed tobacco. Bleeding was the remedy which he relied upon to stay his hemorrhage, and calomel to check the diarrhæa ; treatment which we are now accustomed to re-

gard as homicidal. His thread of life must have been of the toughest fiber ever woven, to endure, for so many years, the gnawing of such diseases and the corrosion of so much poison.

During the first six years after his retirement from the presidency, his health was not much worse than it had usually been in Washington. Every attack of bleeding at the lungs, however, left him a little weaker than he had ever been before, and his recovery was slower and less complete. During the last two years of his life, he could never be said to have rallied from these attacks, but remained always very weak, and knew few intervals, and those very short, of relief from pain. A cough tormented him, day and night. He had all the symptoms of consumption. One lung was consumed entirely; and the other was diseased. Six months before his death, certain dropsical symptoms, which had threatened him for years, were painfully developed; and from that time, he was alternately swollen by dropsy and, at once, relieved and prostrated by diarrhæa. At times, to use his own language, he was "one blubber" from head to foot; and when he seemed to be threatened with immediate death from this disease, he would be saved by another which reduced him so low that he would recline for many hours helpless and feebly gasping for life. The moment he recovered a little strength, the dropsy regained its power, and again he swelled, only to be relieved and reduced as before.

The patience which he displayed during those years of dissolution sometimes approached the sublime. No anguish, however severe, however protracted, ever wrung from this most irascible of men a fretful or a complaining word. Mr. Blair relates an incident witnessed by himself at the Hermitage, when he visited the General toward the close of his life, which exhibits the patient tenderness of the dying man in a touching light. The General was sitting in an arm-chair, suffering from one of those agonizing headaches to which he was subject in his last years, and to which every man is subjects who chews tobacco. His temples were throbbing visibly. He sat silent and motionless, as was his wont at such

times, wholly absorbed in mere endurance. A little nephew, a sturdy; boisterous urchin, six years of age, was playing about the room, unconscious of the silent sufferer. In one of his rough gambols, he ran his head, with tremendous violence, full against the General's body. The sick man turned ashy pale, fell back in his chair in breathless agony, and remained, for a minute or two, speechless. When he recovered his breath, he said, in a tone of the most exquisite tenderness, as though pitying the child :

“ Oh, my dear boy, you don't know how much pain you have given your uncle !”

Seldom, down to his last hour, was he so far subdued by pain that he could not converse with animation upon political topics. One day, about six weeks before his death, when he was reclining in bed, he surprised Dr. Edgar by asking him :

“ Doctor, what do you think will be my fame with posterity ? I mean, what will posterity blame me for most ?”

Now, Dr. Edgar had been for many years a political opponent of General Jackson, and held opinions respecting some of his acts which were decided. Wishing to avoid a political argument with a dying man, he tried to evade the question. The General, however, pressed it upon him, and seemed anxious for an explicit answer.

“ Well,” said the clergyman at length, “ if I must give an opinion, General, I think posterity will blame you most for proscribing people for opinion's sake. In Kentucky, every Adams man was turned out of office except one, and he resigned because he said he should have to bear the blame of all the rascality done in the State.”

The remark which General Jackson made upon these words surprised Dr. Edgar as much as it will surprise the reader. He said that during all his presidency he had turned but one subordinate out of office by an act of direct, personal authority, and he was a postmaster. Dr. Edgar expressed his astonishment at this statement, when the General repeated it with emphasis and particularity.

Changing the subject, Dr. Edgar asked him what he would have done with Calhoun and the other nullifiers, if they had kept on.

“Hung them, sir, as high as Haman,” was the instantaneous reply. “They should have been a terror to traitors to all time, and posterity would have pronounced it the best act of my life.”

As he said these words, he half rose in bed, and all the old fire glowed in his old eyes again.

Almost to the last he was pestered by office-seekers, who desired his signature to their petitions, and by hero-worshipers, who wished to see his face before it was hidden for ever from mortal view. A gentleman who visited the Hermitage in one of the last weeks of the General's life, describes his interview with the “dying hero :” “It was about noon when I arrived. Throngs of people were in attendance, waiting to see the General. He would receive only two or three at once, so I sent my card, and after about an hour was ushered, in company with a stranger, into the presence of the Hero of Orleans. The feeble old man was lying upon a sofa, his head and shoulders elevated upon the bolster. He was clad in an old style, snuff-colored coat, with a high stiff collar, and a coverlet was thrown over him from his feet to his bosom. His only attendant was a negro boy, who stood near, fanning away the flies with a bush. The hero is now extremely emaciated. His chest is meager and collapsed ; his cheeks hollow and ghastly ; his once falcon eye sunken and rayless ; and his whole countenance, when under no excitement, languid and insignificant. The gentleman who had entered with me brought a letter from General Armstrong, commending him to President Polk for some office, and he had come here to get the signature of Andrew Jackson, before he should carry it to Washington. The way he was jilted was truly *hickory*. The old General repulsed him with a stern—

“‘No, no, no ! I can do no such thing ; they'll say I'm dictating to the President.’

“ And then he fell to lecturing on the way he was annoyed by the office-seekers.

“ “ I am dying,” said he, “ as fast as I can, and they all know it, but they will keep swarming upon me in crowds, seeking for office—intriguing for office.”

“ The gentleman, after assuring General Jackson that General Armstrong directed him to call and obtain his autograph to this paper, concluded to put the document in his pocket and say no more about it. We remained in the General’s private room about twenty minutes, and had to give place to others who were waiting.”

To other seekers for governmental favor he was more complaisant. The last writing that General Jackson ever penned (except franking letters) was a statement designed to help his old friend and fellow soldier, General Robert Armstrong, to a pension. The reader may remember that to General Armstrong he had bequeathed his sword—the sword of Pensacola, New Orleans, and Florida. Impatient to testify, in this signal manner, his regard for his friend, and desirous to promote his political objects, he had given him the sword with his own hand late in the year 1844. He afterwards, just twenty-three days before his death, strengthened Armstrong’s claim to governmental favor by writing the following statement :

“ I have carefully examined the within declaration of General Robert Armstrong, for a pension, and do hereby certify that it is true in all its parts ; and I do further certify that in the battle of the 23d of January, 1814, called and known by the name of Enotockopco, the shameful flight of my rear guard produced panic and confusion in my whole army, that it was the unflinching bravery of then Lieutenant Armstrong, acting as captain of the volunteer artillery guards, that saved my whole army from a total and shameful defeat, and all my wounded from horrid massacre. This little Spartan band, of about twenty-five in number, met and bravely faced upwards of five hundred of the bravest Creek warriors, checked them in their desperate onset, and at one fire of this savage host, I saw seven of this little heroic band fall ; among them was Lieut. Armstrong, commanding as captain, severely wounded. He fell by the side of the cannon, exclaiming to his men this heroic expression :

*“ ‘ Some of you, my brave fellows, must perish ; but save the cannon.’ ”*

“ They did save the cannon and my whole army from a shameful defeat, and my brave wounded from barbarous massacre. For this severe wound General Armstrong claims a pension—I might have said glorious wound. Can there be an American bosom that will not respond ? Yield it to him, to the full amount of a captain’s pay, as an honorable testimonial to the bravery of the General, and his valuable services to his country.

“ Given at the Hermitage, Tennessee, this 16th of May, 1845.

“ ANDREW JACKSON.”

These friendly efforts were so successful, that General Armstrong was, soon after, appointed consul to Liverpool, then one of the most lucrative offices in the President’s gift.

On Sunday, May 24th, the last Sunday but two of his life, General Jackson partook of the communion in the presence of his family. He spoke much of the consolation of religion, and declared that he was ready for the final summons. “ Death,” said he, after the ceremony was over, “ has no terrors for me. When I have suffered sufficiently, the Lord will take me to himself ; but what are my sufferings compared with those of the blessed Saviour who died on the accursed tree for me ? Mine are nothing.”

A friend of the family, Mr. William Tyack, who spent a few days at the Hermitage, while its master’s life was ebbing, kept a diary of his conversation and his sufferings. I extract a few passages :

WEDNESDAY, May 28th. “ On my arrival, I find the ex-President more comfortable than he has been, although his disease is not abated, and his long and useful life is rapidly drawing to its close. He has not been in a condition to lie down, during the last four months.

THURSDAY, May 29. “ General Jackson is rather more comfortable, having obtained from opiates some sleep. This day he sat a while to Mr. Healy, who has been sent by Louis Philippe to paint his portrait. Mr. Healy told me that it was the design of the King of the French to place his portrait by the side of Washington, which already hangs in his gallery. Mr. Healy is commissioned by the King to paint the portraits of twelve of the most distinguished revolutionary patriots, to surround those of

Washington and Jackson. Mr. Healy was enabled to make much progress in his work to-day; and, as usual, the General received many visitors—more than thirty. All were admitted, from the humblest to the most renowned, to take the venerable chieftain by the hand and bid him farewell. Among the visitors was General Jessup, an old friend and companion in arms. The meeting of these faithful and gallant soldiers and servants of the republic was deeply interesting and affecting. A reverend gentleman called to inquire in regard to the General's health, his faith, and future hope. The General said: 'Sir, I am in the hands of a merciful God. I have full confidence in his goodness and mercy. My lamp of life is nearly out, and the last glimmer has come. I am ready to depart when called. The Bible is true. The principles and statutes of that holy book have been the rule of my life, and I have tried to conform to its spirit as near as possible. Upon that sacred volume I rest my hope for eternal salvation, through the merits and blood of our blessed Lord and Saviour. Jesus Christ.'

FRIDAY, May 30. "The General passed a bad night; no sleep; extremely feeble this morning. Mr. Healy, with much exertion on the part of the General, was enabled to finish the portrait, on which he had labored with great care. It was presented to the General. After examining it for some minutes, he remarked to Mr. Healy, 'I am satisfied, sir, that you stand at the head of your profession. If I may be allowed to judge of my own likeness, I can safely concur in the opinion of my family. This is the best that has been taken. I feel very much obliged to you, sir, for the very great labor and care you have been pleased to bestow upon it.' The family were all highly gratified with its faithfulness. I consider it the most perfect representation I have ever seen, giving rather the remains of the heroic personage than the full life that made him the most extraordinary combination of spirit and energy, with a slender frame, the world ever saw.

"At nine o'clock, as is the custom, all the General's family, except the few who take their turn to watch by his side, took their leave of him. Each of the family approached him, received his blessing, bade him farewell; kissed him, as it would seem, an eternal good night; for he would say, 'My work is done for life.' After his family retires, it is touching to witness this heroic man, who has faced every danger with unyielding front, offer up his prayer for those whom Providence has committed to his care; that Heaven would protect and prosper them when he is no more—praying still more fervently to God for the preservation of his country, of the Union, and the people of the United States from all foreign influence and invasion—tendering his forgiveness to his enemies, and his gratitude to God for his support and success through a long life, and for the hope of eternal salvation through the merits of our blessed Redeemer.

"The General exerts himself to discharge every duty, and with all the anxious care that is possible; but his debility, and the unremitting anguish he suffers, has almost extinguished every power except that of his intellect. Occasionally his distress produces spasmodic affections; yet, in the midst of the worst paroxysm of pain, not a murmur, not even a groan escapes his lips. Great and just in life, calm and resigned in death.

"SATURDAY, May 30.—The General passed a distressed night; no sleep; extreme debility this morning, attended with increased swelling of the abdomen and all his limbs, and difficulty of breathing. He said, 'I hope God will grant me patience to submit to his holy will. He does all things well, and blessed be his holy and merciful name.' His Bible is always near him; if he is in his chair it is on the table by his side; when propped up in bed, that sacred volume is laid by him, and he often reads it. He has no power, and is lifted in and out of his sitting posture in bed to the same posture in his chair. Nothing can exceed the affectionate care, vigilance, and never-ceasing efforts of his pious and devoted family to administer to his relief; and yet, in the midst of the affliction, which calls for so much attention and sympathy, kindness and hospitality to strangers are not omitted.

"June 1.—'This day,' the General said, 'is the holy Sabbath, ordained by God, and set apart to be devoted to his worship and praise. I always attended service at church when I could; but now I can go no more.' He desired the family to go, as many as could, and charged them to continue the education of the poor at the Sunday school. This new system of instruction, he said, which blended the duties of religion with those of humanity, he considered of vast importance; and spoke with an emphasis which showed his anxiety to impress it on the family. Mrs. Jackson, and her sister, Mrs. Adams, regularly attended to their instructions on the Sabbath. A part of the family went to church. The General looked out of the window, and said, 'This is apparently the last Sabbath I shall be with you. God's will be done; he is kind and merciful.' The General's look is often fixed with peculiar affection on his grand-daughter, Rachel, named after his wife, so beloved, and whose memory he has so tenderly cherished. The young Rachel has all the lovely and amiable qualities for which the elder Mrs. Jackson was so remarkable.

"MONDAY, June 2.—The General passed a bad night. No sleep. An evident increase of water on the chest. He read many letters, as usual. Some of them were from persons of whom he had no knowledge, asking for autographs, and making other requests. The letters were opened by some of the family. Mrs. Jackson or Mrs. Adams were almost constantly with him. He looked over them; those of importance were opened and read. Among them was one from Major Donelson, chargé des affaires to Texas, giving an account of the almost incredible proceedings of the British



agent, Elliott, to prevent the annexation of Texas to the United States. The General said, 'We have made a disgraceful sacrifice of our territory (Oregon); an important portion of our country was given away to England without a shadow of title on the part of the claimants, as has been shown by the admissions of the English ministers on referring, in Parliament, to the King's map, on which the true boundaries were delineated, and of which they were apprised when urging their demands.' 'Right on the side of the American people, and firmness in maintaining it,' he continued, 'with trust in God alone, will secure to them the integrity of the possessions of which the British government would now deprive them. I am satisfied that they will assert and vindicate what justice awards them; and that no part of our territory or country will ever be submitted to any arbitration but of the cannon's mouth.'

"He felt grateful, he said, to a merciful Providence, that had always sustained him through all his struggles, and in the defense of the continued independence and prosperity of his beloved country, and that he could now give up his stewardship and resign his breath to God who gave it, with the cheering reflection that the country was now settled down upon a firm, democratic basis; that the rights of the laboring classes were respected and protected; 'for,' he added, 'it is from them that the country derives all its prosperity and greatness, and to them we must ever look to defend our soil when invaded. They have never refused—no, sir, and never will. Give them an honest government, freedom from monopolies and privileged classes, and hard money—not paper currency for their hard labor, and all will be well.'

"At 2 o'clock, P. M., his distress became suddenly very great, and the water increasing to an alarming extent, an express was sent to Nashville, twelve miles, for surgical aid. An operation was performed by Dr. Esselman with success; much water was taken from his abdomen, which produced great relief, although extreme prostration.

"TUESDAY, June 3d.—Much distress through the night. Opiates were freely administered, but sleep appeared to have passed from him. Calm and perfectly resigned to the will of his Redeemer, he prayed to God to sustain him in the hour of dissolution.

"At 10 A. M., Doctors Robinson and Walters arrived from Nashville. Doctor Esselman having remained with the General through the night, a consultation was held, and all that had been done was approved; and all that could be done was to conform to the General's temporary wants.

"At 4 P. M., I left his house for home. He expressed great solicitude in my behalf, but I was silent; the scene was too affecting; and I left this aged soldier, statesman, and Christian patriot, with all the pious and hospitable inmates of the Hermitage, without the power of saying farewell."

On the Friday before he died, in an interval of compara-

tive relief, he gave many directions respecting the affairs of his farm ; and conversed much upon Texas and Oregon. He, also, expressed to his daughter his desire to be buried without pomp or display of any kind.

“ I am pretty comfortable,” said he, “ but I feel that I shall not long be with you. When I am about to depart hence, send for my old friends, Major Lewis and Judge Campbell (but I fear Judge Campbell is too feeble to come) to make arrangements with my son for my funeral. I wish to be buried in a plain, unostentatious manner.”

Speaking of Texas, he said : “ All is safe at last.” He praised warmly the conduct of his “ old friend and companion-in-arms,” General Sam. Houston, declaring that to him the United States owed the “ recovery ” of Texas. Reverting to Oregon, he said he knew President Polk would firmly maintain the rights of the country, but hoped that this could be done without resorting to war.

“ If not,” said he, “ let war come. There will be patriots enough in the land to repel foreign aggression, come whence it may, and to maintain sacredly our just rights and to perpetuate our glorious constitution and liberty, and to preserve our happy Union.”

All day long his mind seemed full of this subject. He dictated a letter to the President, expressing confidence in his judgment and patriotism, and urging him to act promptly and resolutely in the affairs of Texas and Oregon. This was his last letter. The next evening, twenty two hours before his death, he franked a letter to Mr. Thomas F. Marshall of Kentucky, who had written to inquire respecting his health. He never signed his name again.

He saw the light of another Sunday morning—June the eighth—a still, brilliant, hot day. He had been worse the day before, and Dr. Esselman had remained all night at the Hermitage.

“ On Sunday morning,” writes Dr. Esselman, “ on entering his room, I found him sitting in his arm chair, with his two faithful servants, George and Dick, by his side, who had just removed him from his bed. I imme-

diately perceived that the hand of death was upon him. I informed his son that he could survive but a few hours, and he immediately dispatched a servant for Major William B. Lewis, the General's devoted friend. Mr. Jackson informed me that it was the General's request that, in case he grew worse, or was thought to be near his death, Major Lewis should be sent for, as he wished him to be near him in his last moments. He was instantly removed to his bed, but before he could be placed there he had swooned away. His family and servants, believing him to be dead, were very much alarmed, and manifested the most intense grief; however, in a few seconds reaction took place, and he became conscious, and raised his eyes, and said: 'My dear children, do not grieve for me; it is true I am going to leave you; I am well aware of my situation; I have suffered much bodily pain, but my sufferings are but as nothing compared with that which our blessed Saviour endured upon that accursed cross, that we might all be saved who put their trust in him.' He first addressed Mrs. Jackson (his daughter-in-law), and took leave of her, reminding her of her tender kindness manifested toward him at all times, and especially during his protracted illness. He next took leave of Mrs. Adams (a widowed sister of Mrs. Jackson, who had been a member of the General's family for several years) in the most kind and affectionate manner, reminding her also of her tender devotion toward him during his illness. He next took leave of his adopted son in the most affectionate and devoted manner. He next took leave of his grandchildren and the children of Mrs. Adams. He kissed and blessed them in a manner so touchingly impressive that I have no language that can do this scene justice. He discovered that there were two of the boys absent—one of his grandsons and one of Mrs. Adams'. He inquired for them. He was informed that they were at the chapel, attending Sunday school. He desired that they should be sent for. As soon as they came, he kissed and blessed them also, as he had done to those with him. By this time, most of his servants had collected in his room or at the windows. When he had taken leave of them all, he delivered one of the most impressive lectures on the subject of religion that I have ever heard. He spoke for nearly half an hour, and apparently with the power of inspiration; for he spoke with calmness, with strength, and, indeed, with animation. I regret exceedingly that there was no one present who could have noted down his precise words. In conclusion, he said: 'My dear children, and friends, and servants, I hope and trust to meet you all in heaven, both white and black.' The last sentence he repeated—'both white and black,' looking at them with the tenderest solicitude. With these words he ceased to speak, but fixed his eyes on his granddaughter, Rachel Jackson (who bears the name of his own beloved wife), for several seconds. What was passing through his mind at that moment I will not

pretend to say ; but it did appear to me that he was invoking the blessings of Heaven to rest upon her."

Major Lewis arrived about noon. "Major," said the dying man, in a feeble voice, but quite audibly, "I am glad to see you. You had like to have been too late."

During most of the afternoon he lay tranquil and without pain, speaking occasionally to Major Lewis, who never left his bedside. He sent farewell messages to Colonel Benton, Mr. Blair, General Houston, and to other friends not known to the public. At half-past five, after a long interval of silence, his son took his hand, and whispered in his ear :

"Father, how do you feel ? Do you know me ?"

"Know you ?" he replied, "yes, I know you. I would know you all if I could see. Bring me my spectacles."

When his spectacles were put on, he said :

"Where is my daughter and Marian ? God will take care of you for me. I am my God's. I belong to him. I go but a short time before you, and I want to meet you all, white and black, in heaven."

All present burst into tears. The crowd of servants on the piazza, who were all day looking in through the windows, sobbed, cried out, and wrung their hands. The General spoke again :

"What is the matter with my dear children ? Have I alarmed you ? Oh, do not cry. Be good children, and we will all meet in heaven."

These were his last words. He lay for half an hour with closed eyes, breathing softly and easily. Major Lewis stood close to his head. The family were about the bed silently waiting and weeping. George and the faithful Hannah were present. Hannah could not be induced to leave the room. "I was born and raised on the place," said she, "and my place is here." At six o'clock the General's head suddenly fell forward and was caught by Major Lewis. The Major applied his ear to the mouth of his friend, and found that he had ceased to breathe. He had died without a

struggle or a pang. Major Lewis removed the pillows, drew down the body upon the bed, and closed the eyes. Upon looking again at the face, he observed that the expression of pain which it had worn so long had passed away. Death had restored it to naturalness and serenity. The aged warrior slept.

Two days after, he was laid in the grave by the side of his wife, of whom he had said, not long before he died : "Heaven will be no heaven to me if I do not meet my wife there." All Nashville and the country round about seemed to be present at the funeral. Three thousand persons were thought to be assembled on the lawn in front of the house, when Dr. Edgar stepped out upon the portico to begin the services. After prayer had been offered, a favorite psalm of the departed was sung :

" Why should we start and fear to die ?  
What timorous worms we mortals are !"

The text of the sermon was : " These are they which came out of great tribulation, and washed their robes white in the blood of the Lamb." The preacher related, with impressive effect, the history of the late religious life of the deceased, and pronounced upon his character an eloquent, but a discriminating eulogium. Another hymn which the General had loved concluded the ceremonies. The body was then borne to the garden and placed in the tomb long ago prepared for its reception. " I never witnessed a funeral of half the solemnity," wrote a spectator at the time. The tablet which covers the remains bears this inscription :

GENERAL

ANDREW JACKSON,

BORN ON THE 15TH OF MARCH, 1767,

DIED ON THE 8TH OF JUNE, 1845.

## CHAPTER XLVIII.

## P O S T H U M O U S .

WHEN the news of the death of General Jackson reached Washington, the President of the United States ordered the departments to be closed for one day, and Mr. Bancroft, the Secretary of the Navy and Acting Secretary of War, directed public honors to be paid to the memory of the ex-President, at all the military and naval stations.

In every large town in the country there were public ceremonies in honor of the deceased, consisting usually of an oration and a procession. In the city of New York the entire body of the uniformed militia, all the civic functionaries, the trades and societies, joined in the parade. Mr. Van Buren was invited to deliver the oration. In declining the invitation, he said that no one had had better opportunities than himself to observe the character of the departed, and no one, among the millions who mourned his death, would cherish his memory longer or more reverently. He announced his intention "to prepare, at a proper time, a suitable memoir of his conduct and principles."

Among those who were invited to attend the commemoration in New York, was Chief Justice Taney. This gentleman used the following language in replying to the committee: "The whole civilized world already know how bountifully he was endowed by Providence with those high gifts which qualified him to lead, both as a soldier and a statesman. But those only who were around him in times of anxious deliberation, when great and mighty interests were at stake, and who were with him also in the retired scenes of domestic life, in the midst of his family and friends, can fully appreciate his innate love of justice, his hatred of oppression in every shape it would assume, his magnanimity, his entire freedom from any feeling of personal hostility to his political

opponents, and his constant and unvarying kindness and gentleness to his friends."

The record of the solemnities performed in the city of New York, in honor of Andrew Jackson, forms an octavo volume of three hundred and three pages.

Twenty-five of the orations delivered on this occasion, in various towns and cities, were published in a volume entitled "Monument to the Memory of General Andrew Jackson." They were those of George Bancroft, at Washington; George M. Dallas, at Philadelphia; Benjamin F. Butler, at New York; Levi Woodbury, at Portsmouth, New Hampshire; Benjamin C. Howard, at Baltimore; John Van Buren, at Albany; Wilson McCandless, at Pittsburgh; M. H. McAllister, at Savannah; A. F. Morrison, at Indianapolis; Francis R. Shunk, at Harrisburg; Ellis Lewis, at Lancaster, Pennsylvania; Pliny Merrick, at Boston; Hugh A. Garland, at Petersburg, Virginia; John A. Bolles, at Lowell, Massachusetts; Hendrick B. Wright, at Wilkesbarre, Pennsylvania; Andrew Stephenson, at Richmond; Thomas L. Smith, at Louisville; W. McCartney, at Easton, Pennsylvania; Samuel A. Cartwright, at Natchez; William Irwin, at Lancaster, Ohio; J. G. Harris, at Charlotte, Tennessee; Rev. D. D. Love, at Pottsville, Pennsylvania; Rev. G. W. Bethune, D. D., at Philadelphia; Rev. Thomas Brainard, at Philadelphia.

The comments of the press upon the character of the deceased were not all of a eulogistic character. Many of the whig editors could not refrain from again deploring the "fatal popularity" of a "military chieftain," who had brought unexampled woes upon a too confiding people.

A remarkable scene occurred at the June meeting of the New York Historical Society. The meeting on this occasion was unusually large and interesting. Daniel Webster and a concourse of less distinguished politicians were present. Mr. Prosper M. Wetmore offered a series of resolutions, eulogizing General Jackson, and "lamenting, in common with our fellow-citizens throughout the Union," his death. Mr. Ben-

jamin F. Butler seconded the resolutions, and Mr. Webster supported them with a few of those ponderous nothings which he well knew how to employ when he was compelled to speak and had naught to say. The President of the Society, Governor Bradish, was about to put the resolutions, when, to the astonishment of the assembly, Mr. Fessenden rose and delivered himself thus :

“ I don't see, Mr. President, why such a society as this should be called on to put forth resolutions commendatory of the life and character of General Jackson. (Murmurs of disapprobation. A voice, ‘ Who's that ? ’ Hon. Mr. Bokee—‘ Pooh ! it's only a Yankee lawyer ! ’—a laugh.) It is true, he was a President of the United States, and a Major-General in the army, but what has that to do with this society—with historical literature ? I don't agree at all with many of the opinions put forth in the address of the gentleman who seconded the resolutions. I can not sanction the resolutions themselves. (Applause and hisses.) I say I can not approve of those resolutions, and I will oppose them, though I stand alone. For thirty years I have sincerely and fervently opposed General Jackson, and I can not consent now, because he is dead, to approve of his conduct. General Jackson certainly never contributed any thing to the Historical Society, nor to any other that I know of. He was not a literary man. Why, then, should a literary society be called on to pass such resolutions ? Again, did he exhibit the pure motives and self-sacrificing devotion of the first Presidents ? No, I don't believe he did. Why, then, pay him this mark of honor ? Truth should come from societies like this. (Applause and hisses.) On his accession to office, General Jackson put a political enemy in jail, because he had been a defaulter under the previous administration ; and he said he would keep him there till the money was paid, or he humbled himself before him. This led me to expect that he would carry out this stern administration of justice. But did he do it ? No. There was more defaulting under Jackson than there was under all the Presidents ; but because the defaulters had voted for him, he let them escape. Again, he gave the lie to John Quincy Adams about his approbation of the Florida treaty ; and even when his own letter was produced in evidence, he still swore it was all a lie. Well may they call him ‘ the man of the iron will,’ for he was determined to make it the sole arbiter of truth and falsehood. (Laughter, applause, hisses, and confusion.) But he has gone to a land where neither his will nor the behests of his party will determine what is right and wrong. (Applause, hisses, and confusion, in the midst of which the Hon. Mr. Bokee and the great body of the members of the Court of Errors, who had been invited to be



present, rose and left the room.) I hope he has repented of his sins, and gone to a better state of existence. (Loud hisses.) We ought to recollect that we are not the first in this business; the Empire Club has gone before us. I don't want to make myself notorious—(shouts of laughter)—but when, as a member of this society, I was called on as a literary society—(a laugh)—to approve of the conduct and character of General Jackson, I have only to say that I approve of neither." (Applause and hisses.)\*

Mr. Charles King, of the *New York American*, vehemently supported the sentiments advanced by Mr. Fessenden. After a desultory debate, the resolutions were put and carried, only three gentlemen voting against them—Mr. Fessenden, Mr. King, and another.

A conversation said to have occurred in a New York omnibus, between an anti-Jackson broker and a democratic merchant, reveals much of the verdict of the people upon the character of Andrew Jackson :

MERCHANT (with a sigh) : "Well, the old General is dead."

BROKER (with a shrug) : "Yes, he's gone at last."

MERCHANT (not appreciating the shrug) : "Well, sir, he was a good man."

BROKER (with shrug more pronounced) : "I don't know about that."

MERCHANT (energetically) : "He was a good man, sir. If any man has gone to heaven, General Jackson has gone to heaven."

BROKER (doggedly) : "I don't know about that."

MERCHANT : "Well, sir, I tell you that if Andrew Jackson had made up his mind to go to heaven, you may depend upon it he's there."

The gold box mentioned in the will of General Jackson was awarded, a few years ago, to a volunteer who distinguished himself during the war with Mexico, WARD B. BURNETT, colonel of a regiment of New York Volunteers.

For three years after the death of General Jackson the

\* Report in *New York Herald*, June 20, 1845.

interior of the little church at the Hermitage was draped in black. In 1855 the sword of the General was presented by the family of General Armstrong, then deceased, to the nation ; and the gift was formally accepted by Congress, many of the members pronouncing new eulogiums upon the character of him who had worn it. An equestrian statue of General Jackson, by Clark Mills, has been placed by order of Congress in Jackson Square in the city of Washington. This was the first public statue ever erected by order of Congress to a citizen of the United States. A statue of General Washington now adorns a public ground of the federal capital, but it was placed there several years after Mr. Mills had set up his statue of the victor of New Orleans. In 1856, the State of Tennessee bought the Hermitage estate, intending to offer it to the United States as the site of a military academy. It is now (1860) in contemplation to remove the remains of General Jackson and his wife from the Hermitage garden to the summit of the hill at Nashville upon which stands the State capitol, and there to erect over them a suitable monument.

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## CHAPTER XLIX.

### CONCLUSION.

RESPECTING the character of Andrew Jackson and his influence, there will still be differences of opinion. One fact, however, has been established : during the last thirty years of his life, he was the idol of the American people. His faults, whatever they were, were such as a majority of the American citizens of the last generation could easily forgive. His virtues, whatever they were, were such as a majority of American citizens of the last generation could warmly admire. It is this fact which renders him historically interesting. Columbus had sailed ; Raleigh and the Puritans had planted ; Franklin had lived ; Washington fought ; Jefferson written ;

fifty years of democratic government had passed ; free schools, a free press, a voluntary church had done what they could to instruct the people ; the population of the country had been quadrupled and its resources increased ten fold ; and the result of all was, that the people of the United States had arrived at the capacity of honoring Andrew Jackson before all other living men.

People may hold what opinions they will respecting the merits or importance of this man ; but no one can deny that his invincible popularity is worthy of consideration ; for what we lovingly admire, that, in some degree, we are. It is chiefly as the representative man of the Fourth-of-July, or combative-rebellious period of American history, that he is interesting to the student of human nature.

Those who have read "Wanderings in Corsica" by Gregorovius, will agree with me, that he who would know Napoleon must begin by studying Corsica, which has produced many Napoleons. And no man will ever be able quite to comprehend Andrew Jackson who has not personally known a Scotch-Irishman. More than he was any thing else, he was a North-of-Irelander. A tenacious, pugnacious race ; honest, yet capable of dissimulation ; often angry, but most prudent when most furious ; endowed by nature with the gift of extracting from every affair and every relation all the strife it can be made to yield ; at home and among dependents, all tenderness and generosity : to opponents, violent, ungenerous, prone to believe the very worst of them ; a race that means to tell the truth, but, when excited by anger or warped by prejudice, incapable of either telling, or remembering, or knowing the truth ; not taking kindly to culture, but able to achieve wonderful things without it ; a strange blending of the best and the worst qualities of two races. Jackson had these traits in an exaggerated degree ; as Irish as though he were not Scotch ; as Scotch as though he were not Irish.

The circumstances of his childhood nourished his peculiarities. He was a poor boy in a new country, without a father to teach him moderation, obedience, and self-control.

The border warfare of the Revolution whirled him hither and thither ; made him fierce and exacting ; taught him self-reliance ; accustomed him to regard an opponent as a foe. They who are not for us are against us, and they who are against us are to be put to death, was the Carolina doctrine during the later years of the war. The early loss of his elder brother, his own hard lot in the Camden prison, the terrible and needless sufferings of his younger brother, the sad but heroic death of his mother, were events not calculated to give the softer traits the mastery within him. All the influences of his early years tended to develop a very positive cast of character, to make him self-helpful, decisive, indifferent to danger, impatient of contradiction, and disposed to follow up a quarrel to the death. Not to be of *his* party was to be a traitor, and death was too good for traitors.

His first step in life shows something of the quality of the man. His father, his forefathers, his relatives in Carolina, had all walked the lowlier paths of life, and aspired to no other. This poor, gaunt, and sickly orphan places himself at once upon the direct road to the higher spheres. He gets a little money by teaching school, mounts his horse, and rides away to the North to find a chance to study law. He accomplishes his purpose with playful ease. After two years of the most boisterous jollity, the tradition of which is fresh in Salisbury to this day, he has won his license to practice, and goes off, penniless, to regions unknown. He lingers a year in the old settlements ; long enough to discover that there is no room there for a lad of his mettle.

Westward, ho ! Half a dozen young lawyers go with him to the valley of the Cumberland, but *he* has contrived to get an appointment as prosecuting solicitor, an office supposed to be worse than valueless ; but he made it invaluable. He becomes at once a man of mark in the new country. The little settlement existed in a state of siege, liable to attack at every moment by day and night. Every clump of trees, every thicket of cane, every field of corn, might conceal a foe. Every mile of every journey had its own peculiar peril. The

solicitor, half the year on horseback, compelled to make long and solitary journeys, lived in an atmosphere of danger, and became habituated to self-reliance. Always escaping, he learned to confide implicitly in his star; believing that no harm could befall if Andrew Jackson was near. To the last hour of his life this was his habitual feeling.

This kind of life may make men tender and amiable at home, because they are always *protecting* its beloved inmates; but abroad, in their intercourse with men, they become direct, fierce, clannish. Their feelings are primitive and intense. They use "the English language." If a man varies from the truth, they call him a liar without more ado, and the man who is called a liar can only clear his character by fighting. A word and a blow becomes the law of the wilderness. And in a country where fighting is one of the necessities of every man's lot, the man readiest to fight and ablest in fight, is necessarily the first man.

How prompt Mr. Solicitor Jackson was with vituperative word and rectifying pistol, we all know. While yet a boy he notifies Commissary Galbraith to prepare for another world before attempting to execute his threat of chastisement. Offended in the court-room at Jonesborough by Mr. Avery's harmless satire, he tears a blank leaf from a law book and dashes off a challenge,\* which he himself delivers; and, before the sun sets, the duel has been fought, and the antagonists are friends again. The affair with Dickinson was of a very different nature. So far as the *written* testimony enables us to judge, Jackson was wholly, grossly, abominably in the wrong. But the tradition in the circle of Jackson's nearest friends is clear and strong, that Dickinson had reviled Mrs. Jackson in his cups.

If any one wishes to see into the soul of Andrew Jackson, let him turn back to Vol. I., page 356, and read the letter of the fiery General to his friend, Judge Campbell, in which he

\* This challenge is still preserved among the papers of Col. Isaac T. Avery of Morganton, N. C.

pours out his wrath upon Silas Dinsmore. He begins quite moderately, and proceeds so for a few lines, until he mentions Dinsmore's stopping a lady and her ten slaves, when he suddenly boils over. "And, my God, is it come to this? Are we freemen, or are we slaves? Is this real, or is it a dream?" And so he raves on to the end. In his wild, fiery way he loved justice, but when excited by passion he was totally incapable of discriminating between right and wrong. He was like his own Mississippi, which flows on with useful placidity until the levee gives way, and then is instantly converted into a roaring, rushing, devastating torrent—and the levee is made of material that can not resist an extraordinary pressure. But, after all, the mighty river pushes directly for the Gulf of Mexico, and gets there by the route that is best for itself.

Jackson had passed his forty-fifth year without having achieved any thing very remarkable. Public life he had tried, but had not shone in it, and nothing became him in his public life so much as his leaving it. He had tried merchandising, but not successfully. He tried speculation in land, and nearly lost all his estate by his ignorance of law, but saved it, at the last moment, by one of his characteristic spurts of energy. Nothing really prospered with him but his farm and his horses, both of which he loved, and, therefore, understood. Upon the whole, however, he had shown himself a leader of the people, helping them, at each turn of his career, to what they wanted most: first, law; then, merchandise; next, horses; lastly, defense.

The massacre at Fort Mims gave him, at length, a piece of work which he was better fitted to do than any other man in the world. Only such energy, such swiftness, such resolution, such tenacity of purpose, such disregard of forms and precedents, such audacity, and such prudence as his, could have defended the Southwest in 1814 and 1815. When a man successfully defends his invaded country, we must not too closely scrutinize the acts which dim the luster of his great achievement. The captain who *saves* his imperiled ship we honor, though, in the critical hour, he may have

sworn like a trooper, and knocked down a man or two with the speaking trumpet. The slaying of the six militiamen, and the maintaining of martial law in New Orleans two months too long, we may condemn, and, I think, should condemn ; yet most of the citizens of the United States will concur in the wish, that when next a European army lands upon American soil, there may be a Jackson to meet them at the landing-place. After making all proper deductions, justice still requires that we should accord to General Jackson's defense of the southern country the very highest praise. It was a piece of difficult work most gloriously done. Not even the party celebrations of the eighth of January ought to hide from us or obscure the genuine merit of those who, in the darkest hour this republic has ever known, enabled it to believe again in its invincibility, by closing a war of disaster in a blaze of triumph.

He came home from the wars the pride, the darling of the nation. No man in this country has ever been subjected to such a torrent of applause, and few men have been less prepared to withstand it by education, reflection, and experience. He accepted the verdict which the nation pronounced upon his conduct. Well pleased with himself, and with his countrymen, he wrote those lofty letters to Mr. Monroe, the burthen of which is that a President of the United States should rise superior to party spirit, appoint no man to office for party reasons, but be the President of the whole people, judging every applicant for presidential favor by his conduct alone. His feud with Adair, and his quarrel with General Scott, soon showed that, with all his popularity and his fine words, he was the same Andrew Jackson as of old, unable to bear opposition, and prone to believe the worst of those who did not yield to him implicitly. He went to Florida in 1818, burthened and stimulated with a stupendous military reputation. The country expected great things of the victor of New Orleans, and the victor of New Orleans was not a man to disappoint his country. He swept down into the province like a tornado, and drove the poor remnant of the Seminoles

into the Everglades. He assumed, he exercised all the prerogatives of an absolute sovereign. He raised troops in his own way ; invaded a foreign territory ; made war upon his brother sovereign, the King of Spain ; put his subjects to death without trial ; shot Ambrister, and permitted the murder of Arbuthnot. He came home, not in chains, to stand his trial for such extraordinary proceedings, but in triumph, to receive the approval of the President, defense and eulogy from John Quincy Adams, exoneration from Congress, and the applause of the people. What an effect such an experience as this was likely to have upon such a mind as his, we need not say.

He reappeared in Florida as its Governor. We may palliate and forgive his conduct there in 1821. It must, nevertheless, be pronounced violent, arrogant, and disgraceful to the civilization of his country. Every unbiased gentleman who witnessed his performances at Pensacola in 1821, beheld them with mingled wonder and disgust. All his worst qualities were inflamed by disease and disappointment. He laid about him like a madman.

He was started for the presidency. He was passive ; he was clay in the hands of two or three friendly potters. Tennessee took up his name with enthusiasm ; Pennsylvania brought it prominently before the nation ; he wrote his tariff letter ; he voted for internal improvements ; the Monroe correspondence was published ; he won a plurality of electoral votes, but was not elected. His disappointment was keen, and his wrath burned anew and with increased fury against the man who had given the office to Mr. Adams. If he did not invent the bargain-and-corruption lie, he did worse, he believed it. To be willing to believe so scandalous a tale respecting such men, except upon what may strictly be called *evidence*, is not creditable to the heart or the understanding of any man. To persist in believing it for fifteen years, after it had been completely disproved, to avow a belief in it, for political purposes, just as he was sinking into the grave, revealed a phase of character which we have a right to call de-



testable. We owe it to the interests of human nature to execrate such conduct.

If General Jackson was passive during the campaign of 1824, he was passive no longer. The exposure of the circumstances attending his marriage, accompanied by unjust comments and gross exaggerations, the reflections upon his mother, the revival of every incident of his life that could be unfavorably construed, kept him in a blaze of wrath. Determined to triumph, he took an active part, at home and abroad, in the canvass. He was elected ; but, in the moment of his triumph, his wife, than whom no wife was ever more tenderly beloved, was lost to him for ever. The calamity that robbed life of all its charm deepened, and, as it were, sanctified his political resentments ! His enemies had slain her, he thought. Adams had permitted, if he had not prompted, the circulation of the calumnies that destroyed her. Clay, he firmly believed, had originated the crusade against her ; for this strange being could believe any evil thing of one whom he cordially hated. Broken in spirit, broken in health, the old man, cherishing what he deemed a holy wrath, but meaning to serve his country well, went to Washington, to find it crowded with hungry claimants for reward.

Oh, what an opportunity was his ! Oh, if he could but have buried the hateful past in oblivion, and risen to the height of his letters to Mr. Monroe ! Or, if he could only have devised some other mode of avenging his private wrongs ! How different were the condition of public affairs in this year 1860, how different the prospect before us, if, instead of that vague and ominous paragraph about “reform,” in his inaugural address, he had used language like this :

“KNOW, all whom it may concern, that in this republic no man should seek, few men should decline, a public trust. To apply for office, fellow-citizens, is of itself an evidence of unfitness for office. I will appoint no man to an office who seeks one, or for whom one is sought. When I want a man, I shall know how to find him. If any one has indulged the expectation that I will deprive honest and capable men of

their places because they thought proper to oppose my election to the presidency, and, in the heat of an exciting canvass, went beyond the limits of a fair and proper opposition, I notify them now and here, that Andrew Jackson, imperfect and faulty as he is, is not capable of conduct so despicable. Depart hence, ye office-seeking crew, whose very presence here shows that your motives for supporting me were base !”

Such a paragraph as this would have astonished the office-seekers ; but the people would have sustained him, would now sustain any president who should utterly defy the office-seeking horde.

General Jackson’s appointment-and-removal policy I consider an evil so great and so difficult to remedy, that if all his other public acts had been perfectly wise and right, this single feature of his administration would suffice to render it deplorable rather than admirable. The captain of a ship who should be, ever and anon, going below and secretly boring a hole in the hull, where it could be reached only with the greatest difficulty, and stopped with greater, we should esteem a bad captain, even though he sailed his ship well, and, upon occasion, fought her valiantly. Something like this General Jackson did to the ship of state ; and ever since his day the crew have had hard pumping ; and we still continue to pump, instead of going into dock and overhauling her bottom, and stopping the leaks, and putting on new copper so thick that no future captain will be able to get his augur through it. Let no one hope for decency or honesty in the government while the servants of the public hold their places at the mercy of the successful wire-puller. Rotation necessitates corruption, organizes corruption, appears almost to justify corruption. The ship needs repairing infinitely more than the officers need changing.

When a man in high office acts upon principles diametrically contrary to those which he professed in private life, we are apt to infer that his professions were hypocritical. Such an inference, in the case before us, would be worse than uncharitable ; it would be erroneous. Unquestionably General

Jackson wrote his fine letters to Mr. Monroe with perfect sincerity, little thinking that he would ever be called upon to act upon the high principles he laid down for the guidance of another. But what is easier than to write lofty sentiments? Men do not much differ in their knowledge of what is right; it is in our power to act up to our knowledge that we differ from one another. Take the most eloquent of the northern heroes of the platform; take the fiercest of the fire-eaters; make one of them, no matter which, emperor of the United States, clothed with power to carry out the ideas with which twenty years of advocacy have made him and us familiar. Where were then his readiness, his confidence, his fluency? How overwhelming the thought, that a mistake of his, trifling as it might seem, applauded as it would be, would affect the welfare of millions of human beings for many ages! Ah! how easy to thrill an audience with glowing sentences, but how difficult, in any province of human affairs, to effect even a slight improvement! I do not accuse Jackson of hypocrisy. He had force enough to carry out a purpose of his own, but not that nobler force which enables men to act upon the high principles in public life which they had approved in private. Influenced at once by his resentments, by gratitude, by the opinions of the New York politicians, by the clamors of the hungry crowd of office-seekers, he seems to have fallen without a struggle.

Many, very many, of the measures of General Jackson's administration will always be heartily approved by a majority of the people of the United States. Some of these were the result of his own sagacity and experience; others were due to the Jeffersonian opinions imbibed in their youth by Mr. Van Buren, Mr. Livingston, Col. Benton, and others. The removal of the Indians, the policy of selling the public lands to actual settlers only and at the bare cost of selling, were the President's own ideas, I believe. With regard to the war upon the Bank of the United States, every one is glad the bank was destroyed, but no one can admire the manner or the spirit in which the war was waged. At the same

time, it is not clear that any other kind of warfare could have been successful against an institution so rooted in the country as that was in 1829.

There is a passage in Mr. Buckle's colossal work, the "History of Civilization in England," which will occur to some as they read of General Jackson and his administration. Gladly do I borrow a few sentences from a writer whose advent is an era in the history of man. "There is no instance on record," says Mr. Buckle, "of an ignorant man who, having good intentions and supreme power to enforce them, has not done far more evil than good. And where the intentions have been very eager and the power very extensive, the evil has been enormous. But if you can diminish the sincerity of that man, if you can mix some alloy with his motives, you will likewise diminish the evil which he works. If he is selfish as well as ignorant, it will often happen that you may play off his vice against his ignorance, and by exciting his fears restrain his mischief. If, however, he has no fear, if he is entirely unselfish, if his sole object is the good of others, if he pursues that object with enthusiasm, upon a large scale, and with disinterested zeal, then it is that you have no check upon him, you have no means of preventing the calamities which, in an ignorant age, an ignorant man will be sure to inflict."\*

I must avow explicitly the belief, that, notwithstanding the good done by General Jackson during his presidency, his elevation to power was a mistake on the part of the people of the United States. The good which he effected has not continued; while the evil which he began remains, has grown more formidable, has now attained such dimensions that the prevailing feeling of the country, with regard to the corruptions and inefficiency of the government, is despair. I will also avow the opinion, that, of all men sent to Washington, the man surest to fall a prey to the worse influences of the place is your honest country gentleman, whose intentions

\* History of Civilization in England, By Henry Thomas Buckle. Vol. I., p. 132. (American edition.)

are excellent, and whose ignorance is almost as complete as his innocence. I find in General Jackson's private writings no evidence that he had ever studied the art of governing nations, or had arrived at any clear conclusions on the subject. Except the "Vicar of Wakefield" it is doubtful if he had ever read any secular book through. That solitary exception is creditable to his taste and feelings as a human being, for no man can be altogether despicable who keenly relishes the "Vicar of Wakefield." But a President of the United States should know all books, all times, all nations, all arts, all artifices, all men. It is essential that he be a man of culture. His culture may not prevent his falling into error, but a cultivated man is capable of being convinced of his errors. He can not *be* a cultivated man without having learned, over and over again, how fallible his judgment is ; without having often been *sure* that he was right and then found that he was wrong. It must be admitted, that General Jackson, when his purpose was formed, when his feelings were roused, was not capable of being convinced. His will tyrannized over him, over his friends, over Congress, over the country. No Dionysius of old was more the autocrat than he. Unapproachable by an honest opponent, he could be generally wielded by any man who knew how to manage him, and was lavish enough of flattery.

Andrew Jackson, in fact, was a fighting man, and little more than a fighting man. It was not till a political controversy became personalized, that his force and strength were elicited. He hated the whig party much, but Henry Clay more ; nullification much, but Calhoun more ; the bank much, but Biddle more. He was a thorough-going human fighting-cock—very kind to the hens of his own farm-yard, giving them many a nice kernel of corn, but bristling up at the faintest crow of chanticleer on the other side of the road.

There are certain historical facts which puzzle and disgust those whose knowledge of life and men has been chiefly derived from books. To such it can with difficulty be made clear that the award is just which assigns to George Wash-

ington a higher place than Benjamin Franklin and Thomas Jefferson—higher honor to the executing hand than to the conceiving head. If they were asked to mention the greatest Englishman of this age, it would never occur to them to name the Duke of Wellington, a man of an understanding so limited as to be the natural foe of every thing liberal and progressive. Yet the Duke of Wellington was the only Englishman of his generation to whom every Englishman took off his hat. And these men of books contemplate with mere wonder the fact, that during a period when Webster, Clay, Calhoun, Wirt, and Preston were on the public stage, Andrew Jackson should have been so much the idol of the American people, that all those eminent men united could not prevail against him in a single instance.

It is pleasant to justify the ways of man to man. The instinctive preferences of the people must be right. That is to say, the man preferred by the people must have more in him of what the people most want than any other of his generation. The more intimately we know the men who surrounded General Washington, the clearer to us does his intrinsic superiority become, and the more clearly we perceive his utter indispensableness. Washington was the only man of the revolution who did for the revolution what no other man could have done. And if ever the time comes when the eminent cotemporaries of Andrew Jackson shall be as intimately known to the people as Andrew Jackson now is, the invincible preference of the people for him will be far less astonishing than it now appears. Clay was the only man of the four leading spirits whose character will bear a comparison with our fiery, faulty hero. Clay was indeed a princely man ; it is impossible not to love him ; but then, his endowments were not great, and his industry was limited. How often when the country wanted statesmanship he had nothing to give it but oratory !

Besides, suppose Washington had not fought the battle of Trenton, and not restored the revolution when it was about to perish. Suppose England had lost the battle of Waterloo,

and given the fellest—because the ablest—of tyrants another lease of power. Suppose the English had sacked New Orleans, and no peace had come to check their career of conquest ! By indulging this turn of reflection, we shall perceive that the Washingtons, the Wellingtons, and the Jacksons of a nation are they who provide or preserve for all other gifts, talents, and virtues, their opportunity and sphere. How just, therefore, is the gratitude of nations toward those who, at the critical moment, do the great act that creates or defends them !

What man supremely admires in man is manhood. The valiant man alone has power to awaken the enthusiastic love of us all. So dear to us is valor, that even the rudest manifestations of it in the pugilistic ring excite, for a moment, a universal interest. Its highest manifestation, on the martyr's cross, becomes the event from which whole races date their after history. Every great career, whether of a nation or of an individual, dates from an heroic action, and every downfall from a cowardly one. To dare, to dare again, and always to dare, is the inexorable condition of every signal and worthy success, from founding a cobbler's stall to promulgating a nobler faith. In barbarous ages, heroes risked their lives to save their self-respect ; in civilized periods, they risk what it is harder to risk, their livelihood, their career.

It is not for nothing that nature has implanted in her darling the instinct of honoring courage before all other qualities. What a delicate creature was man to be tossed upon this planet, and sent whirling through space, naked, shelterless, and untaught ; wild beasts hungering to devour him ; the elements in league against him ; compelled instantly to begin the "struggle for life," which could never cease until life ceased. What but heroic valor could have saved him for a day ? Man has tamed the beasts, and reduced the warring elements to such subjection that they are his untiring servants. His career on earth has been, is, will ever be, a fight ; and, the ruling race in all ages, is that one which has produced the greatest number of brave men. Men truly brave. Men val-

iant enough to die rather than do, suffer, or consent to wrong. To risk life is not all of courage, but it is an essential part of it. There are things dearer to the civilized man than life. But he who can not calmly give up his life rather than live unworthily comes short of perfect manhood ; and he who can do so has in him, at least, the raw material of a hero.

In the eternal necessity of courage, and in man's instinctive perception of its necessity, is to be found, perhaps, the explanation of the puzzling fact, that in an age which has produced so many glorious benefactors of their species, such men as Wellington and Jackson are loved by a greater number of people than any others. The spiritualized reader is not expected to coincide in the strict justice of this arrangement. His heroes are of another cast. But the rudest man and the scholar may agree in this, that it is the valor of their heroes which renders them effective and admirable. The intellect, for example, of a discoverer of truth excites our wonder ; but what rouses our enthusiasm is the calm and modest valor with which he defies the powerful animosity of those who thrive by debauching the understanding of man.

It was curious that England and America should both, and nearly at the same time, have elevated their favorite generals to the highest civil station. Wellington became prime minister in 1827 ; Jackson, President in 1829. Wellington was tried three years, and found wanting, and driven from power, execrated by the people. His carriage, his house, and his statue were pelted by the mob. Jackson reigned eight years, and retired with his popularity undiminished. The reason was, that Wellington was not in accord with his generation, and was surrounded by men who were, if possible, less so ; while Jackson, besides being in sympathy with the people, had the great good fortune to be influenced by men who had learned the rudiments of statesmanship in the school of Jefferson.

Yes, autocrat as he was, Andrew Jackson loved the people, the common people, the sons and daughters of toil,



as truly as they loved him, and believed in them as they believed in him.

He was in accord with his generation. He had a clear perception that the toiling millions are not a class in the community, but *are* the community. He knew and felt that government should exist only for the benefit of the governed ; that the strong are strong only that they may aid the weak ; that the rich are rightfully rich only that they may so combine and direct the labors of the poor as to make labor more profitable to the laborer. He did not comprehend these truths as they are demonstrated by Jefferson and Spencer, but he had an intuitive and instinctive perception of them. And in his most autocratic moments, he really thought that he was fighting the battle of the people, and doing their will while baffling the purposes of their representatives. If he had been a man of knowledge as well as force, he would have taken the part of the people more effectually, and left to his successors an increased power of doing good, instead of better facilities for doing harm. He appears always to have meant well. But his ignorance of law, history, politics, science, of every thing which he who governs a country ought to know, was extreme. Mr. Trist remembers hearing a member of the General's family say, that General Jackson did not believe the world was round. His ignorance was as a wall round about him—high, impenetrable. He was imprisoned in his ignorance, and sometimes raged round his little, dim enclosure like a tiger in his den.

The calamity of the United States has been this : the educated class have not been able to accept the truths of the democratic creed. They have followed the narrow, conservative, respectable Hamilton—not the large, liberal, progressive Jefferson. But the people have instinctively held fast to the Jeffersonian sentiments. Hence, in this country, until very recently, the men of books have had little influence upon public affairs ; and at this moment the spirit that prevails in very many institutions of learning in the country is at war, open, declared war, with the spirit of democracy. And if, at

the present time, there is a class of intelligent and instructed men who feel with the people. and are striving for popular objects, the fact is not due, in any degree whatever, to the colleges. For fifty years the spectacle was exhibited in the United States of two parties—one composed chiefly of the educated and wealthy, and the other chiefly of the men who labor with their hands. The old federal party was the rich man's party ; the old democratic party was the poor man's party ; and of all the various differences between them, this was the most real and essential one. Therefore, the cultivated intellect of the country had little to do with directing its policy and amending its laws. The consequences have been that, as a general rule, the educated American of leisure has been the most aimless and useless of human beings, and the public affairs of the United States have been conducted with a stupidity which has excited the wonder of mankind. To this most lamentable divorce between the people and those who ought to have been worthy to lead them, and who *would* have led them if they had been worthy, we are to attribute the elevation to the presidency of a man whose ignorance, whose good intentions, and whose passions combined to render him, of all conceivable human beings, the most unfit for the office. But those who concur in the opinion that the administration of Andrew Jackson did more harm than good to the country—the harm being permanent, the good evanescent—should never for a moment forget that it was the people of the United States who elected him to the presidency.

The signs are numerous that the cultivated intelligence of the country is about to resume its proper influence in the solution of practical difficulties. What frightful problems glare upon us at this moment ! Upon what terms are these five million Africans to live among us ? By what means is that great crime against nature, amalgamation, the worst result, so far, of the association of the two races, to be prevented utterly ? What is nature's law, man's interest, and God's justice, with regard to the living together of two races unequal, diverse, necessary to one another, impossible to be ever

separated, capable of helping one another where each needs help most, certain to be to each other the greatest blessing or the deadliest curse? Are such questions as these fit to be left to the wranglings of demagogues, drunkards, savages, and madmen?

No, fellow-citizens. There is need here of all the knowledge, all the wisdom, all the virtue with which the country is blessed. And to comprehend the state of things in which we find ourselves, it is necessary, first of all, to know every step of the progress by which the present state of things has been reached. It is necessary that the writings of Washington, Adams, Hamilton, and Jefferson should no longer remain in the public libraries with the leaves uncut. It is necessary, in a word, that the educated intelligence of the United States should begin to understand that there is nothing in recent European history half so worthy of study as the history of the United States since the adoption of the present constitution.

If these volumes, all imperfect as they are, shall be found to throw any valuable light upon the past, and thus elucidate the present, one cherished object of the author will have been attained.

AUGUST, 1860.

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